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THURSDAY 4 FEBRUARY 1999

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IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW



Two of the 'Virginia 12', Elizabeth O'Driscoll (second from left) and her sister, Priscilla O'Driscoll (fourth from left), at their caravan site in Lewisham yesterday Tom Craig

Greetings from Lewisham: wish we weren't here

AS THE "Virginia 12" returned to Britain yesterday to face police questions about a mass outbreak of "air rage", a leading aviation psychologist placed part of the blame for the rise in such incidents on bossy cabin crews and exaggerated claims by airlines.

The Irish holidaymakers who were thrown off a Jamaica-bound flight at Norfolk airport, Virginia, after an alleged drunken brawl landed at Gatwick airport at 9.35 yesterday morning.

After being questioned by immigration officers and police the dishevelled bunch were driven by coach to their caravan site at Lewisham, south-east London. The three O'Driscoll sisters, Priscilla, Elizabeth and Katrina, were reunited with their children. Outside the gates of their yard they pleaded their innocence. "We've been through an ordeal. Four days of rough justice," said Priscilla. "We are the victims here," said Katrina. "There's no sign on a plane to say you can't drink."

The impromptu press conference was broken up when their mother charged at photographers with an iron bar.

Meanwhile, Robert Bor, Professor of Psychology at City University in London, will argue in a new report that many air rage incidents occur because of what he terms "role confusion" by the flight attendants and check-in staff who consider co-ordinating passengers a low priority. "Cabin crew interactions with passengers appear to be the single greatest trigger of disruptive behaviour and it is possible that crew mismanagement of tense situations may make the incident worse," he argues.

Professor Bor's paper, "Unruly passenger behaviour and in-flight violence: a psychological perspective", will be published in the *Travel Medicine International* journal this month. He says: "There should be less emphasis in airline adverts involving images of glamour, comfort and pampering. This disappoints and frustrates passengers whose expectations are not met."

Leading article, Review, page 3
John Walsh, Review, page 4

All teachers must take maths test

ALL NEW teachers will have to pass a national test in numeracy from next year. From 2001, they will also be required to pass tests in literacy and information technology.

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, yesterday asked his exam advisers to draw up the numeracy tests, which will include mental arithmetic.

Students already need to have GCSE maths and English to at least grade C before they are accepted for training. But ministers believe that too many new teachers are leaving training courses with an inadequate grasp of figures, spelling and grammar and unable to use a computer effectively.

Their proposals are part of a scheme to tighten teacher training outlined in the Green Paper on the profession's future published before Christmas.

Primary and secondary school trainee teachers will have to pass the tests, which will be set and marked nationally before they can start teaching. The tests might be taken before, during or after training. Tests in numeracy will be piloted this summer.

John Howson, an education consultant and visiting fellow at Oxford Brookes University, said: "There are concerns about the standard of people

coming into teacher-training courses and whether GCSE standards are adequate. Older entrants may have taken GCSE some years earlier."

But he questioned the effect the new tests would have on recruitment at a time when applications for courses are falling sharply. "I would hope that the Department for Education has researched the effect of this on recruitment."

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which is to help devise the tests, surveyed teachers two years ago to discover how confident they were about teaching grammar and spelling. Teachers complained that they were being asked to take "grammar tests"

and the National Association for the Teaching of English advised them not to take part.

The survey asked teachers whether they felt certain that they could distinguish simple, compound and co-ordinated sentences and explain the origin of words such as "chortle" and "dosh". Most teachers confessed that they could not.

A spokesman for the Curriculum Authority said: "Decisions about the content of the tests will need to be related to the national curriculum for teacher training and the national curriculum to ensure that teachers are in command of the areas and topics which they teach."

Professor David Reynolds, of Newcastle University, who led the Government's numeracy task force on how maths should be taught in primaries, said it was important for teachers to be in command of the basic skills they taught, particularly in view of the task force's proposed changes to maths teaching.

"I think that in the long term, the solution to problems in these areas will lie in ensuring there is a baccalaureate system so that teachers don't give up in these areas between the ages of 16 and 18, as they often do in this country."

London University's Institute of Education introduced tests for its trainee teachers in English, maths, science and information technology last year. Barbara McGleghrie, the institute's dean of initial teacher training, accepted that the new national tests "raised the stakes" for new teachers.

"I am very supportive of the idea. Our tests mean that new teachers have to be up to A-level standard in English and maths even if they are going to teach in primary schools."

She said the institute's tests had shown that some students were 100 per cent competent in the core subjects while others needed remedial tuition.

One academic, who did not wish to be named, questioned whether the tests were necessary for people teaching music, art and English in secondary schools. "There will always be people teaching English literature at A-level for whom a numeracy test is irrelevant."

Mr Blunkett said yesterday in his letter to the Teacher Training Agency, the quango in charge of training and recruitment: "I am determined to take action as soon as possible to further strengthen standards and extend flexibility following the introduction of a basic curriculum and the strengthening of in-service training."

He said that one of the agency's first tasks would be to develop numeracy tests with the QCA.

Education section

Tory advisers try to sabotage court case

ADVISERS to two former Tory prime ministers are orchestrating a campaign aimed at blocking thousands of compensation claims brought against a British company by sick African asbestos workers.

Charles Lewington and Will Weeks are advising Cape plc, which is fighting the claims, to whip up public anger over foreigners claiming legal aid to fight for their rights. The company has already settled the claims of hundreds of British workers, but is fighting those of South Africans - many of whom were only 13 and worked under taskmasters with whips.

Thousands of workers were affected by asbestosis, scarring of the lungs by fibres, or mesothelioma, a fatal lung cancer.

The *Independent* has learnt that Cape, which employs 5,000 people worldwide, has engaged Mr Weeks, the former head of Sir Edward Heath's private office, and Charles Lewington, a

head of communications during John Major's premiership, to undermine the claims.

Mr Weeks is chairman of the lobbyists GJW Government Relations, while Mr Lewington runs the public relations advisers Media Strategy. They plan to put pressure on Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, to stymie South African applications for legal aid by persuading a right-wing newspaper to encourage public outrage over the cost to the taxpayer of 1,900 claims made against Cape in the past week. In fact, if the claimants win their case, the costs are likely to be paid not by the taxpayer, but by Cape.

Mr Lewington is understood to have advised the company: "The wider political implications of the granting of legal aid to even a handful of non-British claimants will be immediately apparent to a paper like the

Budget will give tax breaks to small firms

GORDON BROWN will unveil a "Budget for Enterprise" next month, including new tax breaks for small firms and for workers who retain shares in their own company.

The Chancellor's pre-Budget thinking is revealed in a report, leaked to *The Independent*, by the Labour Party's economic policy commission, which he co-chairs. But Mr Brown's commitment to the "enterprise culture" championed by Baroness Thatcher will worry some Labour MPs.

Yesterday, left-wingers attacked Stephen Byers, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, for saying that wealth creation was more important than wealth redistribution. Outlining the Government's plans, Mr Byers said: "We will extend employee share ownership through targeted tax reform to reward long-term commitment by employees. We will make it easier for employees to become

shareholders in their company."

At present, one million workers are given shares and a similar number granted share options. But only 7 per cent of the workforce has a stake in their company, and Mr Brown wants to double the number of firms running share schemes.

The Chancellor believes wider share ownership will boost the "enterprise culture", and Britain's productivity.

He is worried that many workers sell their shares, and in his 9 March Budget he is expected to announce higher tax relief for employees who hold them for a long period - perhaps more than three years.

Mr Brown is considering whether to raise the amount of share options that can be granted to senior managers tax-free as incentives to improve company perfor-

mance. The current £30,000 limit is thought to be much too low by entrepreneurs, especially in hi-tech industries.

The Labour report suggests that a temporary increase in tax allowances for investment by companies, originally intended to last for only the current tax year, will be made permanent.

During Prime Minister's Questions, John McAllion, MP for Dundee East, demanded an assurance, in the wake of Mr Byers' comments, that Tony Blair would "tackle through socialist policies of redistribution the massive inequalities in health, access to decent housing and in wealth which continue to disfigure and to scar our country."

The Prime Minister replied: "This Labour Government believes there is no inconsistency between policies that promote business and enterprise and the pursuit of a more just society."

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ROBERT HANKS
THURSDAY REVIEW

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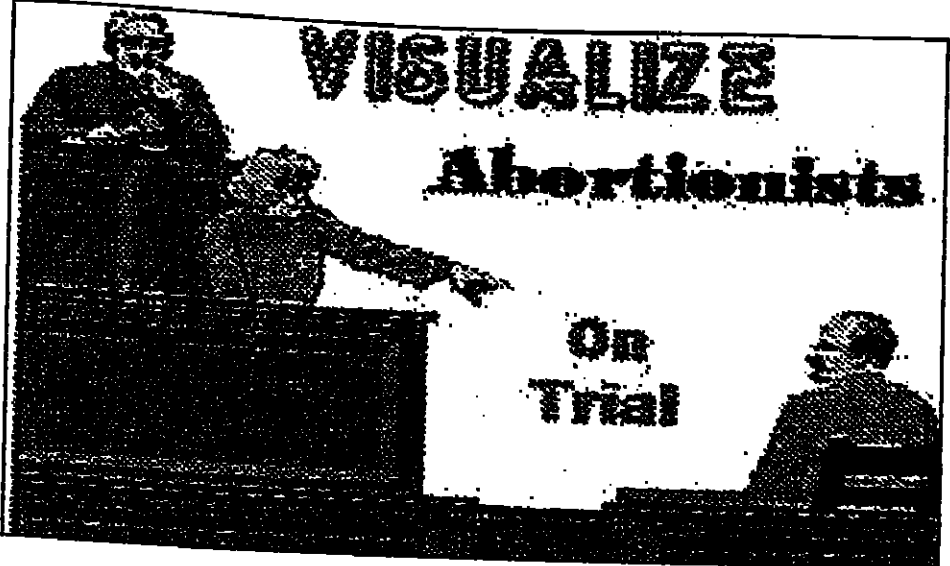
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Doctors' historic triumph over the Web of terror



Clockwise from top left: The anti-abortionists' website; Dr Elizabeth Newall (right), one of the plaintiffs in the Portland case, and her attorney, celebrities Whoopi Goldberg and Mary Tyler Moore, listed on the website as abortion supporters; and Catherine Ramey, a defendant

THE OPERATORS of an Internet website that posts Wild West-style "wanted" posters of abortion doctors and puts a black line through the names of those killed by anti-abortion activists have been ordered to pay a record \$107m (\$65.5m) in punitive damages after a United States federal court ruled that they posed a deadly threat to the safety of medical professionals.

The ruling, which raises important questions about the limits of free speech on the Internet, came at the end of a stormy three-week trial in Portland, Oregon, in which the anti-abortionists were accused of fomenting "domestic terrorism". Several doctors featured on the website testified that they and their families were in constant fear for their lives.

The website, called the Nuremberg Files because it believes abortion doctors should be tried for crimes against humanity, is full of in-temperate language about "slaughter", that would have caused the Nazis to blush and graphic pictures of aborted fetuses "bagged like groceries destined for Satan's table".

Not only does it list more than 200 abortion doctors,

whom it refers to as "baby butchers", it also invites supporters to send information about their addresses, telephone numbers, family status including names and ages of children, car licence-plate numbers, and so on. It offers rewards of up to \$5,000 for information.

Seven doctors have been killed by anti-abortion activists in recent years. There have been 39 bombings of abortion clinics, 99 acid attacks and 16 attempted murders, according to the National Abortion Federation.

In the trial, one doctor from St Louis testified how gunshots were fired into his children's playroom after his name appeared on the website. Another, James Newhall of Portland, described how he had taught his six-year-old son to hide in the bath if he ever heard gunfire in the house. The prosecution team described how doctors had to vary their route to work each day and change cars and phone numbers regularly.

"The jury saw anti-choice 'wanted' posters for what they are - a hit list for terrorists," Gloria Feldt, the president of

Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said after the verdict was announced on Tuesday. "Whether these threats are posted on trees or on the Internet, their intent is the same: to threaten the lives of doctors who courageously serve women seeking to exercise their right to choose abortion."

The suit was prompted by the death of Barnett Slepian, a doctor from Amherst in upstate New York, who was shot by a sniper in the kitchen of his home last October. Like other victims of anti-abortionists, his name was crossed out on the Nuremberg Files website.

Far from condemning the Slepian killing, the website issued this provocative statement: "Those who slaughter God's children without affording them due process of law need to be held accountable."

Planned Parenthood mounted the suit with a group of doctors and took aim at a broad swath of adversaries - not only 12 people they believe were responsible for the Internet messages but also two organisations championing them, the American Coalition of Life Activists and Advocates for Life Ministries.

The plan was not so much to close the website down as to cripple the finances of radical anti-abortion organisations through punitive damages. It worked triumphantly in one sense, since Tuesday's judgment was the biggest financial blow yet dealt to anti-abortion organisations.

But forcing the groups to hand over the money is likely to be highly complicated and subject to lengthy appeals process. The defendants vowed that they would never hand over a single penny.

"I could not in good conscience give money to an industry that thrives on killing children," Catherine Ramey, a defendant, said outside the courthouse. Other defendants said their finances were "judgment-proof", although they gave no details of what that meant. "We will continue to do what we've been doing," said Charles Wyssong, head of the American Rights Coalition, whose personal assets are largely tied up in the upbringing of his 15 children.

The controversy over the case hinges on the interpretation of the First Amendment, which guarantees the right to free speech. According to previous

Supreme Court rulings, published material constitutes a threat only if it is likely to cause an "imminent lawless action".

But in the Portland case, Judge Robert Jones directed the jury to use a lesser standard, saying the contents of the website should be deemed a threat if they could be interpreted that way by "a reasonable person" taking the context of the remarks into consideration.

"Any document that criticises an abortionist could now be construed as threatening," the main defence lawyer, Christopher Ferrara of the American Catholic Lawyers Association, complained. "And that has to alarm anyone who's concerned about the First Amendment."

During the trial, Mr Ferrara admitted the website contained strong, even "offensive, opinions, but said they did not amount to an incitement to violence. Even witnesses for the

defence acknowledged, however, that abortion providers might be intimidated by the campaign against them. "If I was an abortionist, I would be afraid," said a defendant, Andrew Burnett, publisher of *Life Advocate* magazine.

There are signs that the atmosphere of intimidation is fast eroding the willingness of doctors to perform abortions. Roe vs Wade, the Supreme Court judgment that first legalised abortion

in 1973, recognises the right of women to opt for the procedure but does not make it mandatory for hospitals or state institutions to provide it. With every attack, the number of facilities goes down, and pro-choice groups are concerned about large areas of the country - particularly in the Bible Belt south - where women have little or no access to abortion services.

Leading article, Review, page 3



ONLINE OUTRAGE

In the first case filed under a new cyber-stalking law in California, Gary Dellapenta was arrested last month for allegedly impersonating a woman on the Internet and saying she fantasised about being raped. Six men arrived at her apartment.

Abu Hamza al-Masri, the Muslim cleric who leads the London-based Supporters of Shariah, used the group's website to advertise an "Islamic Camp" at a mosque in Finsbury Park over Christmas. The site urged young Muslims to rise up and "defend" themselves.

In March 1995, anarchists were found to have been using the Internet to plan disruption in schools and attacks on multinational firms. Police discovered hundreds of computer files of seditious information. The files were obtained from terrorist groups, including The Sons of Glendower in Wales, Direct Action in France, and the Anti Imperialist Cell, a German anarchist-terrorist group.

A personnel assistant at Glasgow Caledonian University was suspended by his employers last year for using the Internet to incite hatred among football hooligans in the build-up to the World Cup. Iain Smith's website featured pictures of football violence and exchanges from hooligans all over Europe.

A 'Wild West' beyond control

THE IDEA of regulating the Net is recurrent but, as MPs heard this week, it militates against the very nature of the network. Regulation would also crash into the First Amendment to the US Constitution, still the principal driving force behind the Internet's growth.

It guarantees freedom of speech, except for obscenity, which means that not liking somebody's views is insufficient reason to prevent their showing them off. But yesterday's judgment on the anti-abortion website reinforces the point that, while speech may be free on the Net, the consequences can be expensive.

In the UK, the first Net libel case was in 1994, when Philip Hallam-Baker, a researcher at Cern (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire), on the Franco-Swiss border, was sued by Laurence Godfrey, a physicist based in London. At issue were seven articles posted on the Net. He settled out of court.

Few would try to bring such a case now. It is increasingly easy to cover one's tracks in cyberspace. And, as soon as a message is posted or a web page created, it will be copied and every word indexed by

search engines around the Net. Wiping away data once it has been released to the network becomes an endless task.

The problem worsens if you try to ban such publication, as Nottingham County Council did over a report criticising its handling of child-abuse cases. When it barred three British journalists from publishing the report, they put it on the Net, when the council sought an injunction, activists overseas copied the page and displayed it. The Net had won.

If you have something to say, or a picture to show off, finding space on the Web costs almost nothing. Now "free" Internet

service providers (ISPs) in the UK have offered five free megabytes of space. "People are personally responsible for what they publish. Defamation and other laws do apply," said Tim Pearson, chairman of the UK ISP Association.

But attempts to impose censorship externally will fail. "The Internet sees censorship as damage, and routes around it," said John Gilmore, a founder member of the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Details from the anti-abortion website are almost certainly still out there somewhere, and anyone determined enough to find them will.

Commons clash over Hoddle

THE ROW over the sacking of Glenn Hoddle as England football coach resurfaced in the House of Commons yesterday, when Tony Blair was accused of "poking his nose in".

During Prime Minister's Question Time, William Hague, the Opposition leader, asked Mr Blair who the next England coach should be. Mr Blair retorted that he could scarcely believe that the Tory leader was raising the point. "I am content to leave that, I think, to the FA," said Mr Blair.

Mr Hague went on to question why Mr Blair had become involved in the controversy,

when on Monday he criticised Hoddle's reported comments about reincarnation and the disabled. "We all thought Glenn Hoddle's comments were outrageous and we all join in saying so," said Mr Hague. "But given what you just said, will you accept for future reference, and on reflection, that there is a limit to the number of things politicians should poke their noses into?"

Amid uproar, he went on: "Lecturing football associations on who they should sack is beyond that limit!"

Mr Blair replied: "I really cannot believe that you are raising this. You've already, by making the comment yourself, commented on the issue. I suggest you look at what I said."

Mr Blair said of Hoddle on Monday: "If he said what he is reported to have said, in the way he is reported to have said it, then I think that was very wrong." But he also said: "Let us hear his explanation first."

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said later that Mr Blair would have regrets if any-thing he had said had contributed to the FA's decision, but that he stood by his opinions.

Meanwhile Howard Wilkinson, England's caretaker manager, made his first appearance since his appointment, saying he was "very shocked" to find himself in the job. "My head's spinning. The last 24 hours have been very hectic and over the next seven days I can't see the pace dropping," he said.

Like the Prime Minister, however, he was careful to steer away from any subject which he thought was not strictly relevant to his immediate task - which, in Wilkinson's case, is beating France next Wednesday.

Ferguson in line, page 28

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Amnesty to send mission to Ulster

AMNESTY International announced yesterday that it would send a mission to Northern Ireland to investigate and monitor human rights issues, including the continuing "punishment" attacks.

Downing Street gave a cautious welcome to the initiative after talks between the Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, and Tony Blair at the Commons. Labour MPs and the Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland, Andrew Mackay, also lent their support.

Amnesty gave a different version of events, however, to the one provided by Mr Trimble. It stressed that its coverage would not be confined to the question of paramilitary beatings but would cover a wide range of issues that could cause government concern.

Earlier this week Mr Trimble announced that he had invited Amnesty International and another human rights group to Northern Ireland to report on the question of paramilitary beatings and shoot-

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK,
COLIN BROWN, AND
ALAN MURDOCH

ings. Yesterday, after the announcement that a mission was planned, he said he was pleased the organisation had responded positively.

Amnesty International said, however, that it had written to Mr Trimble last July informing him of its intention to send a mission to cover a wide range of human rights concerns and asking to meet him. He had not replied to the letter, it said.

Mr Trimble's public invitation was itself unusual in that Unionist politicians have often criticised human rights organisations, generally on the basis that they are over-critical of the security forces and of emergency legislation.

Amnesty International has concerned itself with many issues and individual cases in Northern Ireland, its annual reports often mentioning "punishment" attacks.

Meanwhile two more attacks



The Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, with Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, in Dublin yesterday to discuss the peace process PA

took place in Northern Ireland, including a particularly serious incident in which a man in his 40s was struck with a sledgehammer and then shot in the stomach in an attack in the town of Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh, which is regarded as one of Northern Ireland's quietest areas. A hospital spokesman described his condition as ill but stable. Police said he was lucky to be alive. In another incident, a 40-year-old man was shot in the foot in a Protestant area of Belfast.

Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister, met Mo Mowlam, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in Dublin yesterday for talks to move the formation of the Ulster Assembly closer

before the 10 March deadline. Ms Mowlam said: "With a bit of determination, imagination, flexibility and just guts we'll get there. There is no complacency, we are all working flat out." Mr Trimble is refusing to sit in the same executive as Sinn Féin leaders until the IRA begins decommissioning. Mr Blair is believed to have urged Mr

Trimble to make progress, and told MPs in the Commons that the Government would expect Sinn Féin to honour its part of the Good Friday Agreement on the decommissioning of arms. A new political row erupted yesterday over claims that alleged intimidation of witnesses may have led to IRA suspects being allowed to plead guilty to

manslaughter instead of murder. Senior Irish politicians expressed deep concern after four men on trial in Dublin since last month for killing Jerry McCabe, a police officer, in 1996 changed their pleas from not guilty of murder to guilty of manslaughter in an apparent plea bargain. The men will be sentenced today.

Rift in IRA as guns go missing

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

A SIGN of the severe internal tensions within the IRA emerged last night when the republican movement publicly admitted that some of its guns had been seized by dissidents.

The *Republican News*, which is closely associated with Sinn Féin, said a small amount of IRA weaponry had been "secretly misappropriated" by people who defected from its ranks more than a year ago.

Most of those who left the organisation went on to form the "Real IRA," the splinter group responsible for the Omagh bomb atrocity that killed 29 people last August.

The unauthorised taking of weaponry is regarded by the IRA as a serious offence which has been followed, on occasions, by the killing of those held responsible.

One of those who left the IRA just over a year ago was a former quartermaster-general who was responsible for hiding weaponry. Republican sources have always said that though he defected to the Real IRA he did not take any guns with him.

The disclosure may help explain recent reports of abductions and fights within IRA ranks. An IRA statement said investigations would continue "until all the missing weaponry has been recovered".

Bosses 'begin cull of awkward staff'

EMPLOYERS HAVE begun dismissing "awkward" staff before the introduction of new laws on workers' rights, according to leading law firms.

Companies are being advised to "deal with problem situations" ahead of imminent legislation that increases compensation for unfair dismissal from £12,000 to £50,000, a figure rising to £84,700 when an employer refuses to reinstate the sacked worker.

The Employment Relations Bill, published last week, also means employees will enjoy full legal protection from unfair dismissal after one year's employment rather than two.

Under the proposed law, which could be on the statute book in April, workers in all British companies will have to involve employee representatives in disciplinary procedures when it is requested.

Martin Warren, employment law partner at the solicitors Eversheds, said two large corporate clients had already

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

taken the decision to dismiss troublesome employees ahead of the introduction of the new law. Mr Warren said managers in the companies were trying to shed staff because of poor performance, but they had not kept proper records to prove the incompetence of the employees concerned. He said another client had also asked for advice on the issue. He told *Personnel Today* magazine that firms in the City of London were among those seeking to sack employees in advance of the new law.

Mr Warren said that, while he would advise firms "purely from a legal point of view and not from a moral one", they should be aware that getting rid of employees in a peremptory manner might have a "down side". He pointed out that the Bill also contained provisions for the recognition of unions, which might be hastened by

attempts to dismiss staff before the law comes into force.

Roger Lyons, general secretary of the Manufacturing Science Finance union, warned against employers in industries unprotected by unions taking "evasive action". He said they would antagonise the employees left in the organisation. "This is hardly a recipe for harmonious relations in the workplace," he said.

Paul Goulding, head of the Employment Lawyers' Association, also added a note of caution. He said that companies failing to adhere to proper procedures when dismissing staff could find themselves involved in costly litigation.

David Bradley, of the lawyers Dibb Lupton, thought "cynical" employers might already have missed the boat. With the law expected to be in force by April, notice periods - especially among middle and senior managers - might be too long to beat the deadline.

How sleeping bird-brains keep one eye on safety

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

BIRDS CAN take 40 winks without being caught by a predator because they can, literally, stay half asleep with one eye open and the other closed, scientists have discovered.

A study of the unusual sleeping patterns of mallard ducks promises to help scientists to understand rare sleep disorders in humans.

Biologists at Indiana State University, led by Niels Rattenborg, say that birds can sleep with both eyes closed and their whole brain asleep, or they can rest half their brain by keeping one eye shut. "Birds have overcome the problem of sleeping in risky situations by developing the ability to sleep with one eye open and one hemisphere of the brain awake," the scientists report in the journal *Nature*.



Scientists have studied birds' sleeping patterns

"We believe this is the first evidence for an animal behaviourally controlling sleep and wakefulness simultaneously." The scientists studied groups of mallard ducks while they rested side by side and found those at the edge of the group were significantly more likely to keep one eye open, with the closed eye being on the side of its nearest neighbour.

"We have found that birds sleeping under risky situations spend more time with one eye open and half the brain awake," said Dr Rattenborg.

The findings have important implications for sleeping patterns in humans, he said. "For example, the feeling of sleepiness and impaired performance experienced after losing sleep may occur because parts of the brain are falling asleep, while the other parts are staying awake."

Singer's money troubles

TONY HADLEY, the former lead singer of the 1980s pop group Spandau Ballet, told the High Court in London yesterday of his "desperate" financial situation as he attempts to build a solo career crumbled.

BY SARAH WESTCOTT

But Mr Hadley's failure to hit the big time as a successful solo artist forced him to sell his home to pay off a £50,000 overdraft in 1993, the court heard. "Maths has never been my forte - I would just go, 'Wow, lots of figures!' and sign forms," he

said. "I was in a desperate financial situation."

Mr Hadley and fellow former band members Steve Norman and John Keeble are suing the songwriter Gary Kemp for hundreds of thousands of pounds of allegedly unpaid publishing royalties.

The case continues.

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Espionage: The 'double outing' of Britain's chief spy in Prague threatens Anglo-Czech co-operation

Tinker, tailor, soldier, ... gay

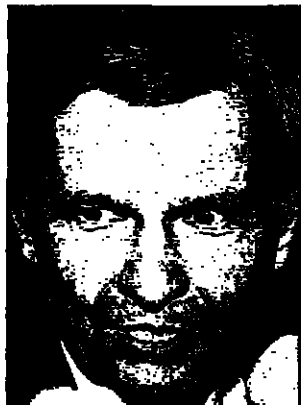
BY ADAM LEBOR
Central Europe Correspondent

AN ABORTIVE bomb plot to destroy the Prague-based Radio Free Iraq, the public outing - in every sense - of MI6's head of station in Prague, the sudden sacking of the head of the Czech intelligence service and the defection of Saddam Hussein's chief spy-master in Eastern Europe.

This is not the plotline of the latest thriller by John Le Carré, but the mysterious ingredients of the international spy scandal now playing to an audience of furious spooks from Baghdad to London, via Prague and other still-to-be-disclosed locations.

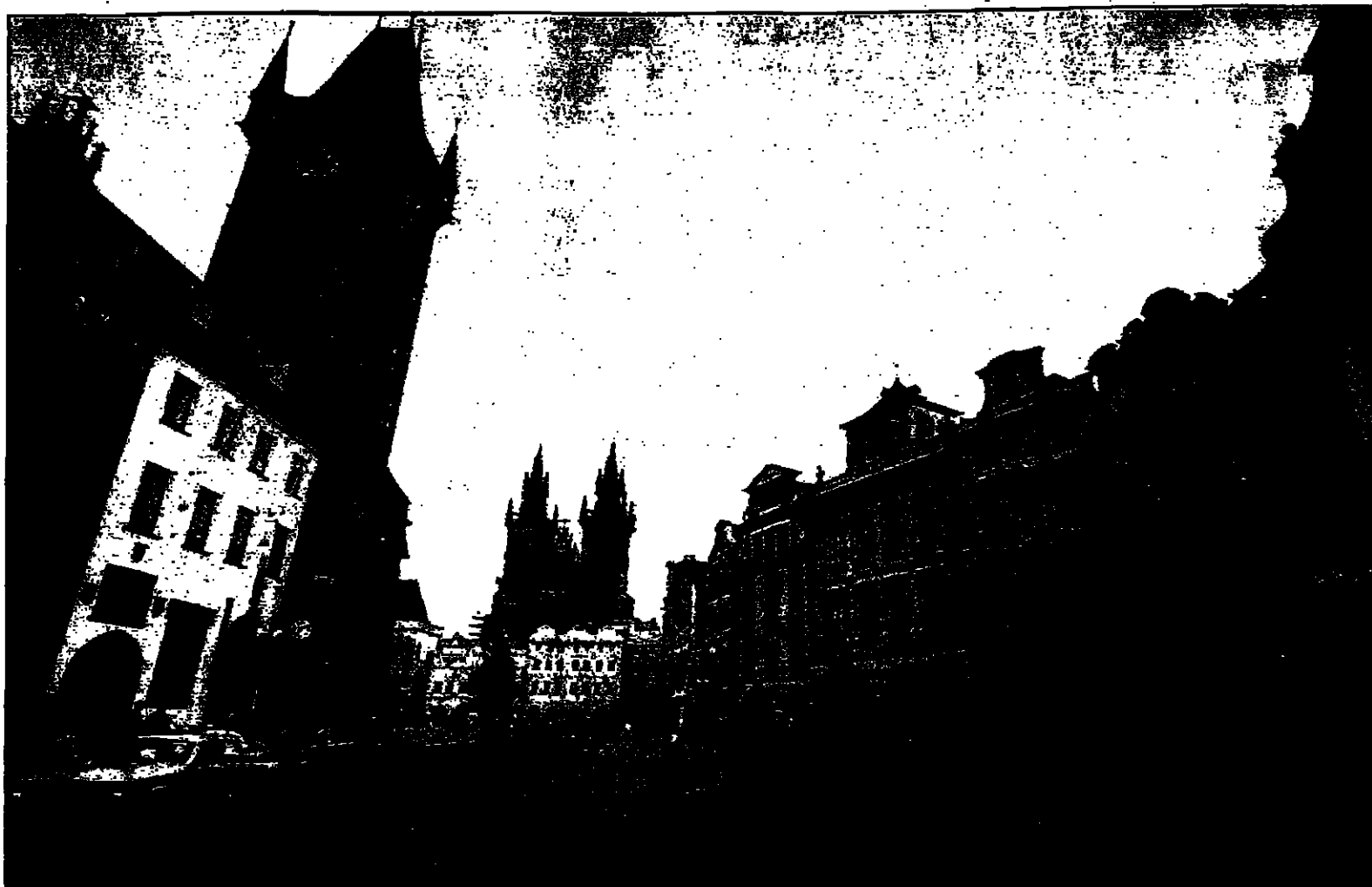
The web of intrigue threatens to wreck co-operation between the Czech Secret Service (BIS) and its Western counterparts and highlights the difficulties of integrating the espionage networks of post-Communist Eastern Europe into the Nato intelligence apparatus.

The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland are scheduled to join Nato this spring. The secret services of these former



Karel Vulterin (left) was sacked as head of Czech counter-intelligence last week. Right: Prague, where intelligence service gossip has alarmed Nato

Communist states have historic ties dating from the Soviet era to parts of the developing world, such as the Middle East. So they are seen as boosting Nato's intelligence capabilities. But Czech television this week named Christopher Hurran, a British diplomat in his 40s based in Prague, as head of station for MI6, the secret intelligence service. His name, address, pictures of his house and the fact he was gay and was living with another man were published in the Czech media.



Now the Czech President, Vaclav Havel, says he is not certain how Nato will reveal classified information to the Czechs "when they see how in the Czech Republic absolutely everything gets gossiped about".

Mr Hurran's naming, which has infuriated Whitehall, followed the sacking last week of Karel Vulterin as head of Czech counter-intelligence services. British officials are livid because foreign intelligence agencies may now use the incident to try to pinpoint previous incumbents as possible MI6 agents. "We do a lot of detailed work with the intelligence services of these three countries, and there are virtually no secrets between us," said one Western analyst. "This episode in Prague and the fact that he [Hurran] has been named could be an embarrassment."

The Czech television station TV Nova reported that Mr Hurran had written to Jaroslav Basta, minister for the secret services, and to Mr Vulterin, complaining of the poor quality of the work of the BIS.

The dispute is believed to centre on a highly secret operation involving Jaber Salim, the Eastern Europe head of Saddam Hussein's secret police. Formerly based in Prague, Mr Salim vanished in December. BIS officers angered MI6 by revealing his role as an alleged double agent, and he is now believed to have defected, possibly to Britain.

Czech television reported that Mr Salim defected after he was ordered to organise a bomb attack on Radio Free Iraq, the Prague-based broadcaster who beams anti-Saddam propaganda into Iraq. Many in Prague believe that it was renegade elements in the BIS that leaked the name of the MI6 station head to the Czech press, possibly as revenge for the sacking of Mr Vulterin.

ITV pins sitcom hope on US guru

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor

THE PRODUCER of *Roseanne* and *The Cosby Show* flew to Britain yesterday to oversee the launch of a first for British television - the adaptation of an American sitcom by American producers for ITV.

The broadcaster, which has not made a successful sitcom since the Seventies, has brought in Tom Carsey to remake his US comedy *That 70s Show* with a British cast and setting. The programme goes on air on 12 February and ITV hopes the £2.5m it is paying will end its comedy lull.

In the past, sitcom traffic has been all the other way, with programmes such as *Man About the House* and *Till Death Us Do Part* becoming *Three's Company* and *All in the Family* in America. Only the *Golden Girls* was turned into a UK-produced show, *Brighton Belles*, and it was so bad it was taken off air halfway through its run.

Now ITV's lamentable record at producing sitcoms has forced it to import Hollywood "comedy factory" techniques.

While most UK sitcoms have runs of just six episodes in a series, *Days Like These* has been commissioned for an initial run of 13 weeks with a further nine to come if it is a hit. Americans producers believe having more episodes of a comedy allows audiences to get to know characters quicker. In the UK sitcoms are traditionally in their second series before they become a hit.

"We're supplying the expertise of having produced hundreds of comedy shows," said Mr Carsey yesterday.

The other aspect of the factory system is the writing. *That 70s Show* was written by a team of 12 writers who test jokes on rehearsal audiences before they reach a script.

The UK series will be rewritten by two British writers, Sam Bain and Jesse Armstrong, and will be set in Luton, Bedfordshire, rather than Wisconsin. The premise of the show revolves around the lives of two families living next-door to each other. *That 70s Show* has been compared with *Happy Days*.

A glimpse behind the curtain of diplomatic intrigue

FEW AGENTS have been "outed" quite so luridly and comprehensively. But Christopher Hurran, the MI6 station chief in Prague turned unwilling star of Czech television, is a fairly typical example of the intelligence officer working under diplomatic cover at a British embassy.

Every foreign correspondent learns to spot them - the first or second secretary you run into at

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

the embassy Christmas party, charming but utterly vague when pressed on their line of work. "Bit of politics, bit of economics, liaison, that sort of thing." The Diplomatic Service List gives no clue, and the Foreign Office will not say a word.

What is slightly unusual in this case, intelligence experts

said last night, is Mr Hurran's senior rank. As a counsellor, he is the third-ranked diplomat in the Prague mission. But he may not have been the only intelligence officer there.

In important posts such as Moscow (and possibly Prague), a two-tier system might operate. There could be a "visible" MI6 man - in this case Mr Hurran - most certainly - whose identity

was known to the host government, and as such was perfectly placed to deal with "walk-in" defectors during the Cold War.

Then there would be the invisibles who never broke cover, whose identity was (theoretically) unknown to the host government. They could be first or second secretaries or even their spouses - so was Janet Chisholm, wife of an MI6 man in Moscow,

who was contact person for the super-spy Oleg Penkovsky executed by the Russians in 1962.

Even the fact that Mr Hurran is gay is less unusual today. In the mid-1980s, Sir Antony Duff, then head of MI6, pressed for homosexuals to be permitted to work for the service. Being gay is no disqualification for a posting abroad with MI6, the Foreign Office; indeed, it can be an

advantage. For one thing, single people cost less; for another, spouses can cause problems.

The Hurran "outing" is unlikely to have been caused by nostalgia for the old days when Czech and British spooks were on opposite sides. In contrast to the "income tax" displayed over Mr Hurran by the BIS, the modern intelligence service, the Czechs were much admired during the Cold War - "as good as, or better than the Russians," one MI6 veteran recalls.

"Almost certainly many of the old people are still there, you simply can't clean out the Augean stables entirely ...

When ideologies change, secret services are like the wing in the house that's being sold. The new boys learn the tricks, and the lights still work."

Astronomers go to war over the renaming of Pluto

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

HOW MANY astronomers does it take to change a planet? So many, apparently, that the International Astronomical Union - the science's governing body - was forced to step into a row yesterday over the status of Pluto.

A proposal by the astronomer Brian Marsden that the planet be renamed "Trans-Neptunian Object No 10,000" has caused such a stellar row between astronomers worldwide that the IAU was forced to issue a statement, to quell "widespread public concern".

Not since astronomers struggled with the preferred pronunciation of Uranus has the discipline been so divided.

Dr Marsden, the head of the Minor Planet Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has already identified 9,999 "trans-Neptunian objects". Now he believes that Pluto should become No 10,000 and he may have science on his side.

Pluto is quite unlike the



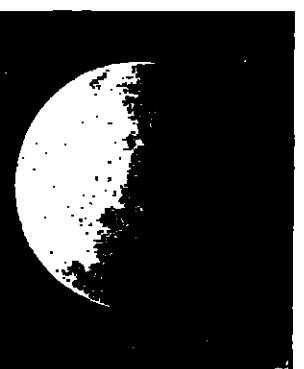
Dr Brian Marsden, who believes that the planet Pluto should be reclassified as a "Trans-Neptunian Object"

other eight planets. Discovered in 1930, almost a century after Neptune, it is a minuscule, rocky body unlike the other outer planets, which are gas giants.

It has a highly elliptical orbit, which means that until later this year it lies inside Neptune's orbit - making it a trans-Neptunian object (TNO).

Furthermore, it orbits at an angle of 17 degrees compared with all the other planets.

But the idea is not proving



popular. "There is ... denigration of the idea that such things as Pluto could be put in the same category as asteroids," Dr Marsden said.

"Somebody said to me, 'Why classify Pluto with the cosmic riff-raff?' It's unfortunate but some people are being extremely dogmatic."

Earlier this week the American Astronomical Society, one of the most powerful in the world, made the bald statement that "this action would

undoubtedly be viewed by the broader scientific community and the general public as a 'reclassification' of Pluto from a major planet to a minor planet. We feel that there is little scientific or historical justification for such an action."

Donald Yeomans of the AAS said from his office at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory: "We're hoping for a statement from the IAU soon, and we have recommended that the status quo be maintained. We have had correspondence from hundreds of astronomers and there's very little support for doing anything to Pluto."

An alternative to Dr Marsden's radical idea, being considered by the IAU, would be to define Pluto as both a major and a minor planet.

Either way, the IAU's Executive Committee (Division III) will soon vote on the matter - though Dr Michael A'Hearn, its chair, insists that any decision "will not alter either the true nature of Pluto or the historical record of its having been generally considered a planet".

A FEW DAYS IN VENICE

This is one of those travel opportunities that only come up once every so often. Since we are obliged to operate a larger aircraft to Venice than originally planned we are able to arrange a short visit to this wonderful city at a fraction of the normal tariff. The programme is presented as either a 3-night arrangement from Monday to Thursday or a 4-night weekend arrangement from Thursday to Monday. As any frequent visitor to Venice will testify, hotels in Venice are usually small in terms of the number of rooms they provide and as such this programme is offered with the choice of three hotels.

Flights are with Monarch Airlines modern A310 aircraft departing London Gatwick.

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Hotel Spagana - located in the sophisticated Spagana Avenue, the hotel is family run and decorated in the 'romantic style' with its colourful interior colours and materials. There are just 19 rooms all with en suite facilities, telephone and satellite television.
Hotel Montecarlo - has an intimate and exclusive feel to it being comfortably furnished in Venetian style. The hotel is located a stone throw away from St Marks Square along one of Venice's typical narrow

lanes. The 48 rooms are all en suite with television and telephone. Supplement £7 per night.

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Ashdown says PR will split parties

LABOUR AND the Tories will each split into two parties but the Liberal Democrats will not merge with Labour, Paddy Ashdown predicted last night.

He said the introduction of proportional representation (PR) for House of Commons elections would happen, even though his failure to persuade Tony Blair to call an early referendum on the issue is believed to have been one factor in his decision to stand down as Liberal Democrat leader this summer.

In a lecture in London, Mr Ashdown angered Labour MPs hostile to close links with his party by saying Labour was "irrevocably split" over its direction. Predicting that left-wingers would form a break-away after PR was brought in, he said: "New Labour would be liberated and the left would have a voice again. No more internal appeasement, no more loveless marriages."

The only thing holding Labour together was electoral expediency, said Mr Ashdown. Under PR, the left could win 10 per cent of the votes in some parts of the country and a new socialist party could win a small number of Commons seats.

He said the Tories were already "two parties at war with one another" because of their "deep and unbridgeable" split over Europe.

"The adoption of PR for Westminster would make it likelier than not that the breach in the Conservative Party would become formal and final,

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

and that the battle that is now being fought inside the Conservative Party would be fought where it really should be—in the open, between two separate parties, with the electorate as judge," he said.

Although some Blairites advocate an eventual merger between Labour and the Liberal Democrats, Mr Ashdown insisted: "This is not my vision and never has been. In fact my aim is the opposite... to help create a political environment where people can work together without having to be in the same party."

He said politicians should not offer the voters a choice between "this lot" and "that lot" but between a number of different approaches such as Thatcherism, Blairism, socialism and liberal democracy.

Despite growing criticism from Labour MPs of Mr Blair's policy of forging closer links with Mr Ashdown and his party, Jack Cunningham, the Cabinet's enforcer, met Alan Beith, the Liberal Democrat deputy leader, yesterday to discuss the working of the joint cabinet committee.

Mr Ashdown accused Mr Blair yesterday of raiding £100m from the National Health Service modernisation fund for the nurses' pay rise announced this week, saying this contradicted the fund's guidelines when it was set up last year.

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Labour's brave attempt to link pensions partly to earnings. Steadily whittled back by the Tories. Serps will be phased out in the next few years.	It offers some link between wages and pensions. A good try.	Will pay out a hefty amount for most. The scheme is also judged too expensive.
Offered by companies to their employees. Pensions are either linked to service or are investment-linked funds used to buy annuities. Benefits vary widely.	It can ensure a decent income in retirement.	Not all employers pay enough into their schemes, leaving their staff in the lurch.
A pension top-up scheme which companies with occupational pensions must also provide. It allows you to beef up your retirement income if you've not made enough contributions before now.	It helps people to boost their pensions relatively cheaply.	Usually not very much investment choice.
A private version of the above, offered mainly by life insurance companies.	A wide choice of funds; allows you to choose your own retirement date after 50.	They are often so expensive that they deliver extremely poor value.
Labour's replacement for Serps (although the benefits of Serps accrued to date will still apply).	An extra £50 a week for those earning up to £9,000 a year, then based on a sliding scale.	This is still woefully inadequate. Serps did offer some people more.
A simplified type of pension, which can either be offered by employers or other groups, including trade unions. Aimed at helping those earning between £9,000 and £20,000.	Simple, cheap. Allows more flexible contribution limits than present personal pensions.	Anyone who wants to pay more than £3,600 a year into one won't be able to.
Aimed at making it easier to invest in unit and investment trust-style pooled funds (can be either a stakeholder, personal or occupational scheme).	Helps to simplify pension funds and make them cheaper.	No big deal. Most of the things it wants to do can be done under the existing system.

Lisa unveiled as pension of future

PLANS FOR a flexible pensions investment vehicle, aimed at encouraging greater savings for old age, were unveiled yesterday by the Government.

The proposal, which Treasury officials said could be combined with Labour's earlier proposals for stakeholder pensions, will offer a "transparent" tax-free wrapper within which pooled investments can be held. The new vehicle, which off-

BY NIC CICCOTI
Personal Finance Editor

cially emphasized denied will be called a "lifelong individual savings account", or Lisa, will allow savers to hold "suitable" funds currently sold by unit and investment trust groups. It would be aimed at individuals who do not have occupational pension schemes or cannot afford the high fees often charged

by personal pensions providers. "It is for the very large chunk of people for whom it would be useful to have a pension to move around with, who have modest earnings around or even below average incomes, who can put small amounts or lump sums away for their retirement," one official said.

Despite its stated aims, some pensions experts wondered whether the new vehicle offered anything not available by other means.

Peter Tompkins, from the Institute of Actuaries pensions board, said: "I do not think there is a lot of beef there. It is really about an investment structure and we are rather mystified that many of the things they said would apply here already do with existing schemes."

While the vehicle was aimed at extending the flexibility available under the Government's stakeholder proposals, published in December, it could also be used for occupational pension schemes and even personal pensions, it was claimed yesterday.

A ceiling on charges for the new vehicle will be imposed and the Treasury has made it clear that it would like fees to be a modest annual percentage with no or low initial and exit fees.

Alistair Darling, Secretary of State for Social Security, said the new mechanism would ensure the success of stakeholder pensions, which are designed to help middle-income earners save for retirement and avoid being dependent on welfare benefits.

"Stakeholder pensions are a

crucial part of our plans. They will provide the secure, flexible and value for money pensions that those on middle incomes lack under the current system," Mr Darling said.

Schemes will be regulated by the Financial Services Authority, the City watchdog. The way they look after pension-plan holders will be overseen by the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority.

Investors will be able to move from scheme to scheme, check the value of their funds on a daily basis and even transfer them from employer to employer. But officials yesterday were unable to say whether an employee with funds in one "pooled" investment vehicle would be able to ask his employer to contribute to that, rather than that company's existing one.

The Treasury added that it was seeking suggestions for a more appropriate name than Lisa, as the vehicle has been dubbed so far, reflecting that they are designed for retirement.

Duncan Mackenzie, chief executive at Direct Line, the telephone-based financial services group, said he backed the key thrust of yesterday's proposals: "In broad terms it is to be welcomed especially its emphasis on adding value to most people's pensions."

However, Angela Knight, chief executive at the Association of Private Client Investment Managers and Stockbrokers, said last night: "We are concerned that the Government has said nothing about direct equity investment in these proposals."

Outlook, page 18

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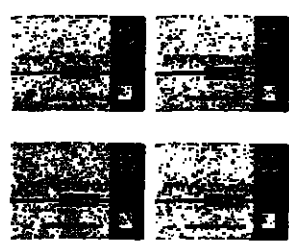
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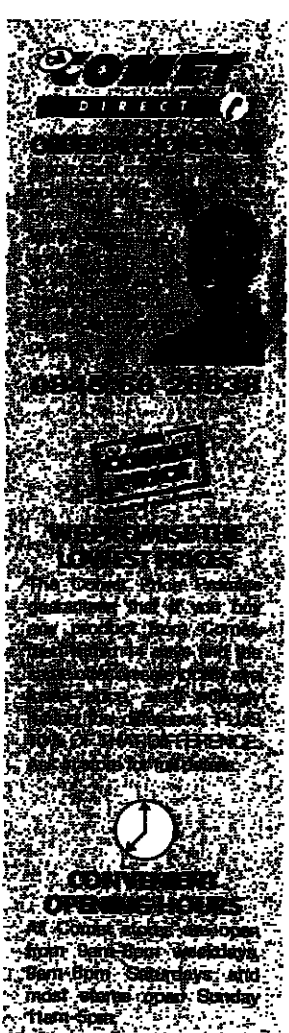
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Teenage girl drowns during Prince's Trust sailing trip

A TEENAGE girl died and two others were injured yesterday when their dinghy capsized during a sailing trip organised by The Prince's Trust Volunteers.

The girl, who has not been named, was among a party of 15 trainees and five instructors on an outing in the Milford Haven estuary in west Wales.

An RAF helicopter, the Anglesey lifeboat and other craft were sent to the scene near Carr Rocks at Pembroke, after the Irish ferry MV Normandy

BY GARY FINN
AND TONY HEATH

spotted their red distress flare at about 3.30pm. Two people were seen in the water, with a third reported trapped under the upturned hull.

Milford Haven coastguard said the accident happened in "reasonably calm" water, and weather conditions during the exercise were good. A Prince's Trust Volunteers spokesman said all involved had been wearing life jackets.

The girl was taken by helicopter to Withybush Hospital, Haverfordwest, but Dyfed-Powys police last night confirmed her death three hours after her rescue. Officers were contacting her family in England to inform them of the tragedy.

A coastguard spokesman said: "All the others in the same group were accounted for."

The other two people rescued are still being treated in hospital, although their conditions are not said to be serious.

Dyfed-Powys police, who have begun an investigation, said four or five people were in the capsized dinghy, which was one of four 14ft sailing craft being used by the group.

The latest accident is a further blow to the reputation of The Prince's Trust. It was fined £10,000 in November after admitting responsibility for the deaths of two volunteers who were killed when a concrete wall collapsed on them on the Orkney island of North Ronaldsay.

'Shakespeare' film script in copycat dispute

BY REYS WILLIAMS

THE MAKERS of the Oscar-tipped film *Shakespeare in Love* rejected claims yesterday that it may have borrowed elements of its plot from an obscure comic novel written in 1941.

Attention had been drawn to similarities between *No Bed for Bacon*, by Caryl Brahms and S J Simon, and the screenplay for the film about the Bard's love life co-written by the playwright Tom Stoppard and an American, Marc Norman.

No Bed for Bacon features a heroine called Viola who pretends to be a boy so she can act on the Elizabethan stage. She falls in love with a Shakespeare struggling with writer's block, who, inspired by their romance, writes one of his finest plays. That is broadly the film's plot. David Farr, co-producer, called the claims "nonsense". He said Norman, who wrote the script Stoppard amended, "knew nothing of the book".



Stoppard: "Drawing from well of Shakespeareana"

Stoppard, who is in India, wrote to the *Evening Standard*, saying both script and book draw from the same well of Shakespeareana. Some similarities are fact - Shakespeare was caught between rival theatre companies, and women were not allowed on stage and so had to go in disguise.

Leading article, Review, page 3

IN BRIEF

Teenager in canal 'was murdered'

THE DEATH of a 16-year-old schoolboy whose body was found in a canal is being treated as murder, police said. Divers found the body of George Mortimer on Tuesday at Exminster Marshes, less than a mile from his home in Exeter, Devon. Two men were being questioned last night.

Tagged prisoners recalled to jail

TWO PRISONERS released early under the electronic tagging scheme launched last week have been recalled to prison, the Home Office confirmed yesterday. They are the first on the Home Detention Curfew scheme to be recalled. About 250 prisoners have been freed under the scheme.

Sarwar 'paid for false statement'

THE LABOUR MP Mohammed Sarwar gave a rival £5,000 cash for a false statement about voter registration irregularities, the High Court in Edinburgh was told yesterday. Badar Islam stood for the Glasgow Govan seat in 1997 against Mr Sarwar, who denies false charges.

Riot police called to wedding

MORE THAN 20 police in riot gear armed with CS gas were called to halt a fight at a wedding reception in Horfield, Bristol. Three men were fined yesterday over the violence last August, including two of the bridegroom's uncle.

Diana letters returned to lover

SIXTY-FOUR love letters written by Diana, Princess of Wales to James Hewitt were returned to the former Life Guards officer, ending the threat of a High Court case against Lawrence Graham, the law firm acting for her estate.

Two share £4.1m lottery jackpot

TWO TICKET holders shared last night's £4.1m National Lottery jackpot. The winning numbers were 3, 16, 18, 24, 39 and 47. The bonus number was 17.

Labour backs down on ramblers' rights

THE GOVERNMENT has backed down a manifesto pledge to give walkers an unrestricted Right to Roam across the countryside. Under proposals to be unveiled next month, ministers will announce statutory and voluntary measures guaranteed to provoke a furious response from Labour MPs and the ramblers' lobby. More than 100 Labour backbenchers are expected to vote

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

next month for a private member's Bill that would give walkers and ramblers a comprehensive freedom to roam across areas now restricted. However, *The Independent* has learnt that the Bill, to be published by Gordon Prentice, Labour MP for Fendle, will not receive government backing.

Ministers will produce their own proposals shortly before the Bill receives its second reading on 26 March, but those plans will not give ramblers the access they have demanded. Government plans will create a statutory framework to allow access to open land through voluntary agreements between councils and landowners.

The Bill will cover five areas - moorland, mountains, heath, down and common land - and the agreements will exempt landowners from liability for any accidents or injuries caused to walkers.

The proposals would tidy up the 1949 National Parks Act, which allowed for voluntary agreements but has proved ineffective, giving greater access to only 50,000 acres.

In a move that will further upset the rambling lobby, it has also emerged that a Government Bill is not likely to be introduced until 2001.

Ministers believe the hybrid approach will help to open up about 4 million acres of open land on a permanent basis.

When in opposition, Labour pledged to overturn centuries-old landowners' rights by giving walkers a legal mandate to wander freely in open country. The changes to the Bill will

infuriate some Labour MPs who have taken part in mass trespass campaigns.

Downing Street, however, is keen to keep the countryside lobby on board - as seen earlier this week when it emerged that No 10 had approached a former Country Landowners' Association president to chair the new Countryside Agency.

Mr Prentice said last night that government failure to back

his Bill would provoke a strong reaction on the back benches, as would any backing off from tough legislation.

As well as more than 100 MPs, Mr Prentice expects support from ministers and former cabinet members. "Labour is reinventing itself as a party of the centre-right. There is going to be a reaction against that from its core supporters; this is one of those issues," he said.

David Beskin, a spokesman for the Ramblers' Association, said a move towards voluntary agreements would be resisted. "If they go for voluntary agreements, that won't change the law drawn up 50 years ago. The 1949 Act has not worked. We want a presumption in favour of access, and any move away from that will leave people angry. We will actually campaign against such a plan."

It's London Men's Fashion Week ... so where are Paul Smith, and Ozwald Boateng, then?

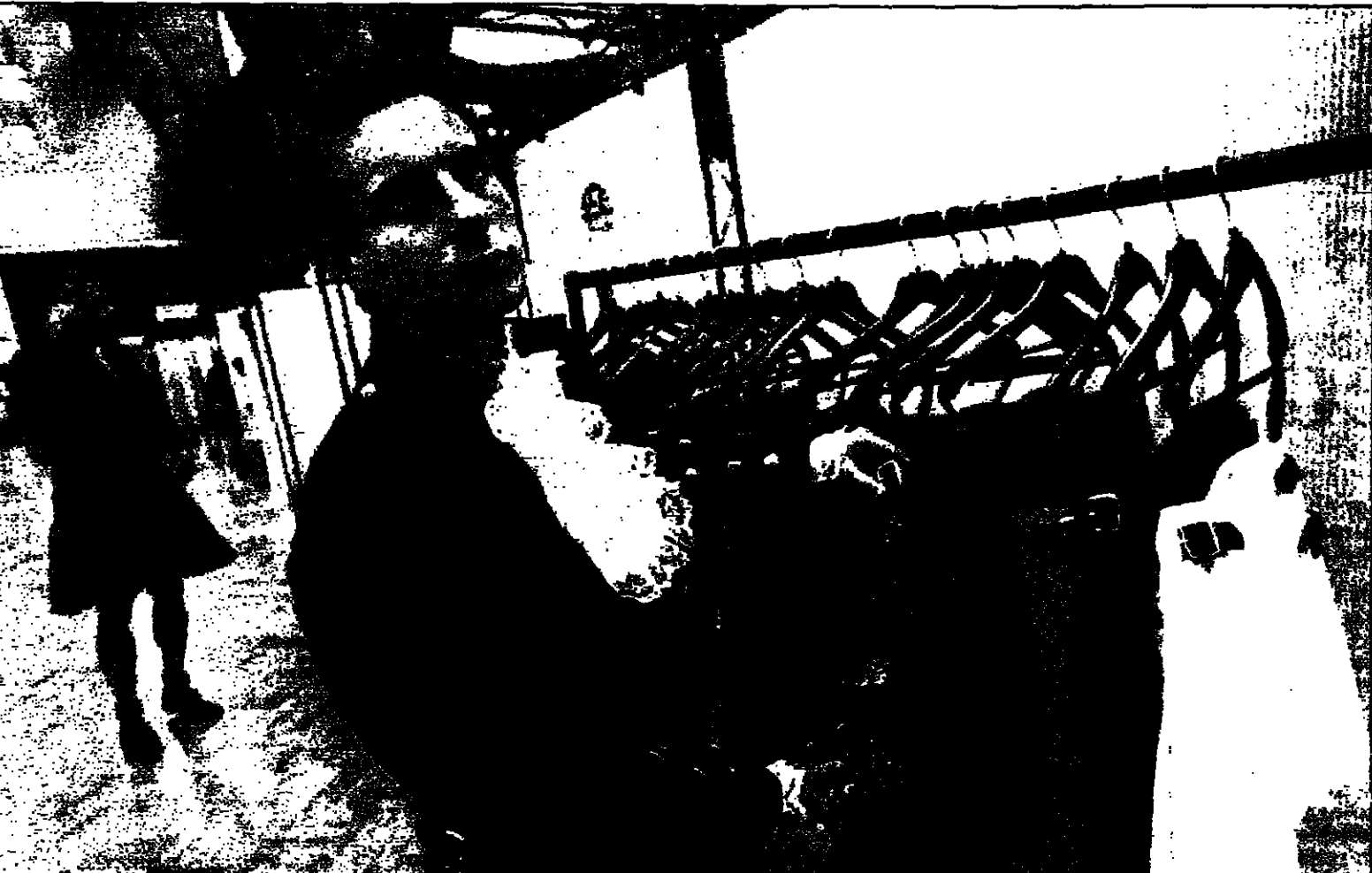
BY MELANIE RUCKEY

LONDON MEN'S Fashion Week (LMFW) kicked off quietly yesterday morning with a five-year gap after two designers fled out from their catwalk shows at the last minute.

Designers Ken Odimah and Jeffrey Green had suffered familiar fashion fates: Odimah's fanciful collection pulled out, and Jeffrey Green's collection was sold.

Unlike London Fashion Week, the glamorous women's event that has been in existence since 1983 and which now impetates internationally with Paris, Milan and New York, LMFW is only nine months old, this being the second event.

And it has a long way to go if it wants to compete interna-



The Scottish company 21st Century Kilts setting out its stall yesterday at LMFW at the Royal Horticultural Halls in Westminster Nicola Kurtz

tionally, as the weakness of the schedule, not to mention two designers pulling out, proved.

The only well-known names holding catwalk presentations were John Rocha who showed last night, and Paul Costelloe who shows this morning. Ironically, neither of these designers is British. Costelloe is Irish, and Hong Kong-born Rocha is based in Dublin.

Instead, all the top British-born-and-bred menswear designers show in Paris and Milan.

Paul Smith, Ozwald Boateng and Burro (who showed at the first LMFW last July) showed their latest collections in Paris

during the past week. Two weeks earlier, Vivienne Westwood and John Richmond had shown in Milan.

Olaf Parker, the designer for Burro, decided to stay away in favour of Paris simply because of finance. "We would like to support the British thing, but London just doesn't attract the right people. In Paris we are guaranteed that the photographers, buyers and press are going to be there. In London they seem more concerned with parties."

The event organiser, John Rowley, is philosophical. "It takes time for these kind of events to grow. We have been sponsored by Honda who are being phenomenally helpful, and they continue their support for another year. I am looking to next year as the acid test of our growth."

Mr Rowley has decided to focus on helping young menswear labels to gain a foothold in the market. "We're giving them a chance to get their businesses going. This is about promoting British menswear design."

The British menswear industry has grown by more than 30 per cent this decade. Retail expenditure on menswear was £7.7bn in 1997, of which about £1bn went on designer brands.

Nelson is branded Butcher of Naples

BY GARY FINN

ADMIRAL HORATIO Nelson has become the latest British icon to suffer at the hands of historians, after an Italian scholar claimed the seafaring hero was in fact a brutal war criminal.

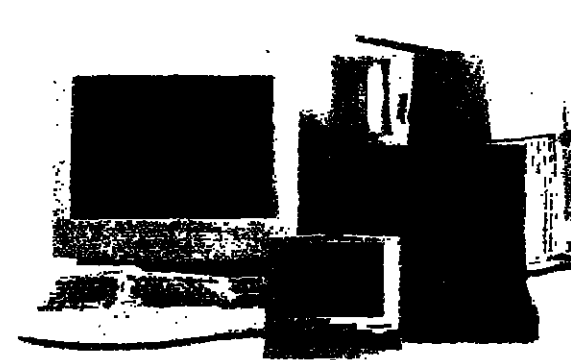
Nelson's reputation has come under attack from Professor Antonio Gargano for his part in the suppression of a liberal uprising in southern Italy 200 years ago. Professor Gargano claims Nelson interfered in a legitimate public uprising.

The rebels, according to Professor Gargano, had successfully negotiated with King Ferdinand IV of Naples to end their insurrection peacefully but when Nelson's fleet arrived in the Bay of Naples, events took a bloodier turn. Instead of an amicable settlement, said Professor Gargano, the rebels were subjected to a bloody round of trials and hangings that earned Nelson the nickname the "Butcher of Naples".

That view was condemned last night by one of his biographers, Tom Pocock, who said: "He was defending Britain's interests against a rebellion which was pretty liberal but was seen as an extension of the regime of the guillotine."



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Half-hearted Hague fails to deliver six of the best questions

PRIME MINISTER'S Question Time is like one of those grim theatrical events in which the principal actors mill around on stage before the curtain goes up. The leads must decide on a plausible expression as they wait for the pre-performance hubbub to die away and this isn't always easy. Should they be contemplative or distracted? Should they exchange pleasantries with colleagues or wait in splendid isolation? Should they catch the audience's eyes or not? For Mr Blair the ordeal doesn't last very long.

He, presumably, waits somewhere behind the Speaker's chair, being given a last-minute massage

by his seconds, entering the chamber only moments before Big Ben bongs the hour, so there is a limit on how long his facial overtone must hold up.

Yesterday he had settled on a cheery grin, which occasionally tipped into laughter. It was a look that expressed assurance and relief. Why, there was nowhere he'd rather be than here at the heart of things, looking forward to the mixture of Tory derision and Labour sycophancy that is his unvarying diet on Wednesday afternoons.

Mr Hague, on the other hand, looked in low morale - there was no quiet smile of anticipation as he con-

templated the smartness of his dialogue, no hint of eagerness in the tilt of the head. Even his pate had lost its customary gleam. He looked as if he'd rather be anywhere else, anywhere rather than facing this compulsory dish of ineffectual protest.

All this may be wild projection on my part, of course - an interpretation coloured by the desultory, half-hearted performance that followed. Because Mr Hague was certainly not in good spirits yesterday, tackling his chosen themes with a marked lack of conviction.

There was some surprise too at his choice of topics. "Who does the

THE SKETCH



THOMAS
SUTCLIFFE

Prime Minister think should be the next manager of England?" he asked first, as if he was making con-

versational foreplay with a new hairdresser. It was a faint naturalism and Mr Blair fell for it, ending his reply by conceding that he "should leave that to the Football Association". This was exactly what Mr Hague wanted him to say but he didn't need to worry. The Leader of the Opposition could hardly be bothered to deliver the counter-punch, in which he invited Mr Blair to agree that there "is a limit to the number of things politicians should stick their noses into".

Next he moved on to the matter of genetically modified food. Mr Blair's eyes shined widely across the tags of his briefing book. Genetical-

ly modified food? That wasn't even anywhere near the Labour front line. It was somewhere in Alaska.

Mr Hague pressed him on why the Government had ignored advice from English Nature and Mr Blair best scientific advice and wrinkled his brow in puzzlement at the obnoxious quirk of the Honourable Gentleman opposite.

If Mr Hague had Lord Sainsbury of Turville in his sights with this question then he had missed a trick, because a little later Caroline Spelman (C, Meriden) produced a far more promising snare. Why, she asked, were the Government

proposing that a humble corner shop and a five-acre supermarket should pay exactly the same amount to fund the new Food Standards Agency?

This question had everything going for it - public sympathy for the underdog, suspicion of big business, the possibility of squeezing some shifty-sounding equivocation out of the Prime Minister.

When the session ended Mr Hague had used only five out of his six allotted questions. If he had had his wits about him he would have swallowed his pride and followed Ms Spelman's sharp initiative with the sixth.

Tories attack 'muddle' over altered foods

WILLIAM HAGUE accused the Prime Minister of ignoring expert advice to create a moratorium on genetically modified crops yesterday, arguing that such a measure would be common sense.

But Tony Blair insisted during question time that the Government would proceed logically and scientifically and "not on the basis simply of prejudice or either side of the debate, because that would only serve to increase public concern on the matter".

Mr Hague said: "The effect of the muddle in government policy is to increase public concern and not to decrease public concern. Why doesn't the Government do the commonsense thing and listen to the advice of its own experts and at least put on hold the release of these new and unfamiliar seeds until the research is done?"

"When those concerns exist on that scale, wouldn't it be better to impose a moratorium and to do so now?" he said.

Replying, Mr Blair insisted: "We are doing research on this

GENE CROPS
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

and of course there is a government committee looking at it too. But I think we do have to proceed on the best scientific evidence, since we are also talking about something where the potentials are very great indeed - the worst way to proceed is to raise fears in the public mind before evidence is put before them."

Mr Hague also pointed to the "huge public concern" about the possible health and environmental impact of GM foods after reports suggested supermarket loyalty cards would be used to monitor their purchases and compare them with cancer cases.

Earlier Tim Yeo, the shadow Minister of Agriculture, referring to the reports, claimed the Government was using the public as "unknowing guinea pigs" in a "vast but secret human experiment" on genetically modified foods.

His concerns were echoed

by Labour MPs who called for an immediate ban on the commercial use of GM products, so-called Frankenstein foods.

Joan Walley, the MP for Stoke North, claimed it had caused an outbreak of a fatal disease that infected 5,000 people, disabling 1,500 and leaving 37 dead.

She told MPs that a mix-up of soya beans with a batch of food supplement produced by genetically engineered bacteria had led to the epidemic in the United States.

"After GM soya beans were mixed up with non-GM soya beans in America, and Monsanto (the biotechnology company) has apparently persisted in their view that segregation is impracticable, it has become impossible for the consumers of many processed foods to know whether or not those foods contain GM soya."

"Some 60 per cent of processed food uses soya. The vast majority of us therefore have already been exposed to these beans, whether we like it or not."



Glenda Jackson helps to release 2,361 balloons on Hampstead Heath, London, celebrating donors to the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust. The charity wants to boost the total of donors in its silver jubilee year. Mark Chivers

Peer calls for £5 fee to visit doctor

HEALTH SERVICE
BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

PATIENTS SHOULD be charged £5 to visit their GP and a new "health tax" should be levied to help to foot the bill for NHS staff wages and better patient care, a Tory peer urged last night.

Opening a Lords debate on the health service, Baroness Gardner of Parkes, a former dentist, said the Government should use its large Commons majority to introduce funding changes - perhaps even a new system.

She told peers: "This Government has a large majority and it should be brave enough to make the changes necessary to provide adequate funding to ensure a strong base for the NHS in the 21st century, either by charges or by a separate health tax or by moving to an entirely new basis for funding health care, such as the successful Australian system."

She suggested £5 a visit would not seem unreasonable but Lady Gardner stressed: "My views differ from official Conservative Party policy."

Government sources claimed later: "The Tory front bench, the Tory back bench and Tory think-tanks are engaged in a barely hidden agenda to prepare the NHS for privatisation. The cat's out of the bag."

Rose warns of Kosovo risks

BRITISH TROOPS could end up being dragged into a war in Kosovo if they were sent in to separate Serbs and ethnic Albanians, the former head of the UN peace-keeping force in Bosnia told MPs yesterday.

General Sir Michael Rose told the Commons Defence Select Committee that air strikes were the best means of preventing further ethnic cleansing and atrocities in the province. Nato ground forces, he said, should be used instead to police the border between Kosovo and Albania to prevent the conflict from escalating.

However, if the Serbs continued to attack the ethnic

PEACEKEEPING
BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

Albanians in the region, Nato should seriously consider training and arming the Kosovo Liberation Army, he said.

Sir Michael, who was an SAS commander before he led the UN peace-keeping work in Bosnia, said there was a danger that any Nato force going into the region would end up being dragged into a war and acting as an army of occupation.

"The difficulty I see with Nato over Kosovo is that they are confusing what can be done by a war-fighting force with

what can be done by a peace-keeping force," he said. "If war does break out again or if there is more ethnic cleansing, then the next option should be to deploy Nato in a preventative role along the border."

The border between Kosovo and Albania is only 100 miles long, Sir Michael said, and the deployment of troops would send a strong signal to the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, to abide by political agreements. Failing that, Nato could start a "train and equip programme" for the KLA so it could take on the superior might of the Serb forces.

Air strikes should also be

used before Nato ground forces were sent in, Sir Michael said.

"I would not stick them straight in straight away. That would be a hostage to fortune. Peace-keepers always end up being shot at by both sides."

Sir Michael added that politicians needed to be aware of the dangers of sending ground troops into Kosovo. "You are talking about an army of occupation and a war," he said.

His remarks were made to the select committee as part of its investigation into the future role of Nato and whether it should become involved in peace-keeping missions on behalf of the UN.

State will be 'mis-selling pensions'

THE GOVERNMENT'S "chaotic" proposals for pension reform would be the "mother and father" of all pensions mis-selling scandals, the Tories said yesterday.

Iain Duncan Smith, the shadow Social Security Secretary, warned that plans outlined in the Green Paper on pension reform last December would

PENSIONS
BY SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

lead pensioners to follow government advice and join the stakeholder schemes even if they were not necessarily the "best or cheapest" investment.

Speaking during a Tory-led debate, he said: "Anyone who

has to make decisions about long-term saving will be confused about what to do and will need advice, but they will have to pay for it. The public will turn around and say: 'Were we not mis-sold this?'"

His concerns were echoed by Frank Field, the former Social Security minister, who said there were "big question

marks over whether we have got the reform right."

Speaking after the Lifetime Individual Savings Account (LISA) plans were unveiled, Alastair Darling, the Secretary of State for Social Security, said: "What we want to do is to give pensioners flexibility. There are people who move around a lot more than in the past."

Shop levy plans

TONY BLAIR signalled a government rethink on proposals to impose a £90 flat levy on all food shops to pay for the new Food Standards Agency. Small retailers reacted angrily last week to plans to charge corner shops the same fee as supermarkets. "The reason we put it forward originally was that it was going to be much more easy to administer than a graduated charge, but of course this is one of the things the consultative paper will look at," the Prime Minister told MPs.

Health tax call

A NEW "health tax" and charges to visit GPs should be levied to help to foot the bill for NHS staff wages and better patient care, said Baroness Gardner of Parkes, a Tory peer.

THE HOUSE



Fire warning

RISING PENSION payouts have financially crippled firefighting in London. Vincent Cable, the Liberal Democrat MP for Twickenham, warned Dr Cable said: "If there is a major emergency then the fewer fire tenders there are, the fewer firefighters there are, the greater the response time and the greater the risk of death."

No Rock secret

TONY BLAIR insisted that the Government was

working very closely with

the Gibraltar authorities to bring to an end a dispute with Spain over fishing rights. He dismissed claims by Sir Teddy Taylor, the Tory MP for Rochford and Southend East, that there was a "secret deal" involving the Government which was causing "huge suffering" for the people of the Rock.

Today's agenda

Commons 11.30am
■ Questions to Agriculture ministers
■ English Revenue Support Grant Reports
■ Short debate on parapets on bridges over motorways. Lords 3pm
■ Disability Rights Commission Bill, committee
■ Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order
■ Police and Criminal Evidence Act (Codes of Practice) Order

QUESTIONS

AND

ANSWERS

Herbal revision

THE GOVERNMENT has asked the Medicines Control Agency to study revising the list of "potent or toxic" herbs. Health minister Tessa Jowell said.

Work for nurses

NEW CONTROLS on NHS re-employment of nurses sacked for misconduct are being considered, Health minister Baroness Hayman told the Lords.

Rat controls

CIVIL SERVANTS are looking into the control of sewer rats. Environment minister Alan Meale said.

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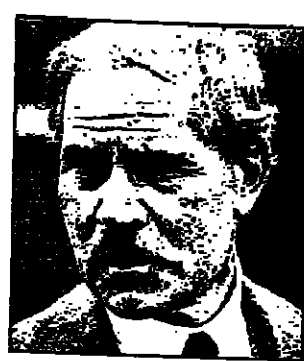
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Official: Zinoviev Letter was forged



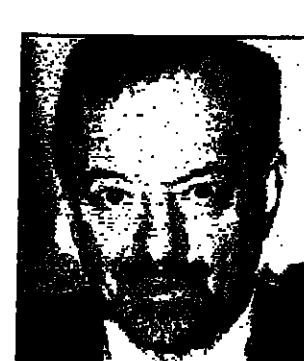
Grigory Zinoviev
Soviet propaganda chief and
purported author of letter to
British Communist Party



James Ramsay MacDonald
Britain's first Labour prime
minister, was severely
embarrassed by the letter



Thomas Marlowe
'Mail' editor published letter
under headline 'Civil War
Plot By Socialists' Masters'



Robin Cook
Foreign Secretary ordered
the inquiry and sanctioned
use of security service files



Gill Bennett, the Foreign Office's chief historian, who tried to solve the Zinoviev Letter riddle

THE ZINOVIEV Letter, which was blamed for Labour losing the 1924 general election, was almost definitely a forgery, an inquiry has concluded.

British intelligence chiefs probably knew it was a fake but released it because they were happy for Labour to be destabilised by its inflammatory language. A Foreign Office official who had incurred heavy debts through currency speculation may have sold a copy to the *Daily Mail*, whose publication of it caused such a furor.

These are the conclusions reached by Gill Bennett, the Foreign Office's chief historian, who has been given access to British and Soviet files to try to solve the mystery.

The letter was addressed to the Communist Party of Great Britain, purportedly from Grigory Zinoviev, the man in charge of Soviet efforts to encourage Communist activity abroad.

It called on British Communists to mobilise "sympathetic forces" in the Labour Party and badly damaged Labour when it was published in the *Mail*, whose editor was Thomas Marlowe.

Ms Bennett said she believes the letter was the work of White Russian émigrés - tsarists who opposed the Bolsheviks - who were angry that Britain's first Labour government had signed a treaty with

the Soviet Union and was also providing it with money.

The White Russians had the means - a foraging circle - and the contacts in the West and in Moscow to be able to produce the letter and circulate it.

Ms Bennett said: "The story remains incomplete... the Zinoviev Letter remains, as before, a most extraordinary and mysterious business."

But her inquiries, including a visit to Moscow, led her to dismiss speculation that the letter was part of a plot by British intelligence staff to discredit both the Bolsheviks and the Labour government.

Neither was it likely that Zinoviev wrote the letter, she said. Russia wanted the British loan and was therefore holding back on fomenting discontent.

However, when the letter emerged in London, intelligence staff, including Desmond Morton, later Churchill's close aide, and Joseph Ball, who later worked for Conservative Central Office, may have decided to use it for their own political means. The Tories certainly capitalised on the affair, raising the possibility that they leaked it to the *Mail*.

Alternatively, the intelligence services may have passed it to the paper themselves. Another possibility was

that J D (Don) Gregory, head of the Foreign Office's Northern Department, sold a copy to pay debts he had accumulated through a married woman, Anna Dyne. His colleagues believed she was his lover.

The intelligence services made no efforts to authenticate the document when it arrived from their agent in Riga, but it was distributed to the Foreign Office, Scotland Yard and the War Office with a note: "The authenticity of the document is undoubted."

Ms Bennett said yesterday: "I have my doubts about whether (Morton) thought it was genuine but he treated it as if it was."

Ms Bennett's report was commissioned by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, after questions were asked in the Commons last year, prompted by a book by the espionage writer Nigel West.

Ms Bennett explained its appeal: "It's not quite sex, lies and videotape but it's certainly sex and spies. It's a fairly potent combination."

Peer calls for £5 fee to visit doctor

HEALTH SERVICE
By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

PATIENTS SHOULD be charged £5 to visit their GP and a new "health tax" should be levied to help to fund the NHS, says a Tory peer, arguing that a £5 fee per visit would be a "very small price to pay" for a "very small benefit".

Opening a Lords debate on the health service, Baroness Williams of Desborough, a former dentist, said the Government should use its "strong majority" to introduce a "small charge" for GP consultations.

She said: "The Government has a duty to ensure that the NHS is sustainable and that it is able to provide a high quality service to all patients. A small charge of £5 per consultation would be a very small price to pay for a very small benefit. It would also help to ensure that the NHS is able to fund the research and development that is needed to keep it at the forefront of medical science."

Immigration chaos costs UK millions

BRITAIN IS losing "tens of millions of pounds" in investment because the Immigration and Nationality Directorate has ground to a halt, it was claimed yesterday.

International lawyers said Britain's immigration process was "worse than a Third World country", with businessmen and asylum-seekers facing months of delays for visas or residency applications.

The chaotic situation is embarrassing the Government, which has pledged in a White Paper to encourage foreign investment by lowering immigration barriers to entrepreneurs. It has also undermined plans to cut the backlog of asylum-seekers, which has grown to 65,000, as the number of applications being processed has fallen from 3,000 to 800 a month.

The Immigration minister, Mike O'Brien, ordered an overhaul of the system in an effort to end years of inefficiency. He accepted there would be "considerable upheaval" from December to February as computers were upgraded and the directorate moved from its offices in Croydon, south London. But immigration sources said in one building alone staff were struggling to cope with 10,000 unsorted documents and two weeks of unopened post.

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Julia Onslow-Cole, a partner with the London lawyers Cameron McKenna, and chairman of the International Bar Association's immigration committee, said the system had become "totally chaotic".

She said: "It's really absurd to have a situation which is paralysing business applications whilst issuing this rhetoric about trying to get entrepreneurs into the country."

She said clients from America, South Africa and the Middle East had been affected by the delays. Foreign business people based in Britain are marooned here for months, while extensions to their residence permits are being reconsidered after they are prevented from travelling abroad to important business meetings, she said.

The overhaul of the immigration system ran into problems last July, when computer sub-contractors pulled out of the project. Home Office officials decided to press ahead with the move to new offices, although the new system has not yet been established.

The Home Office said the move was causing a "temporary drop in service" but urgent cases were still being dealt with.

Dead skier's estate will get rescue bill

SWISS OFFICIALS say they plan to bill the estate of a British skier for £22,000 after blaming him for starting an avalanche in which he died.

Alan Brooke-Dean, from Dorset, died in Verbier on Monday. Mr Brooke-Dean, who would have been 50 today, was with seven others.

He was crushed when a 1,500ft section of an off-piste snowpack slid on to his group. Survivors raised the alarm and four helicopters, seven dogs and a 60-strong team were sent.

Yesterday Swiss officials said they were likely to bill Mr Brooke-Dean's estate for the cost of the operation, because preliminary investigation showed he had contributed to

the avalanche by ignoring signs alerting skiers to the dangers of off-piste conditions.

Pascal Fournier, of Air Glaciers, which mounted the rescue, said: "In Switzerland it is the person who is rescued or their insurance company that normally pays for the rescue operation. This operation could cost 50,000 Swiss francs (£22,000)... it may have been their (the group's) fault that the avalanche started." But Mr Fournier added that it was difficult to tell exactly how avalanches start.

A Briton who died in an avalanche in Val d'Isère, France, on Tuesday was a chalet manager, Mark Wilson.



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One child in five suffers mental stress

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

PRESSURES ON children to succeed and mollycoddling by parents who fear for their safety are turning out a young generation that is emotionally illiterate and at an increased risk of mental breakdown, a report claimed yesterday.

One in five people aged four to twenty is estimated to suffer from problems, ranging from bed-wetting to anorexia, which significantly disrupt their lives.

The toll of mental ill health has been rising in all developed countries since the Second World War and neglect of children's emotional needs in the modern world is to blame, according to the report, by the Mental Health Foundation.

In a three-year study, *The Big Picture*, published yesterday, which examined more than 1,000 pieces of evidence, the foundation concludes that children are failing to thrive emotionally, are becoming less resilient and less able to cope with the ups and downs of life.

It says children are represented as "evil demons" or as "dolls and angels" but not as humans, and that an adult-centred society treats them as "designer accessories or pampered pets". The pressures on them to achieve are enormous but too little is done to help them to build the resilience they need to cope when things go wrong. "Huge sums [are invested] in our children's intellectual abilities and there can be no reason for not investing in their mental health and emotional intelligence," the report says. Although welcoming recent



"Children must be allowed to try things and be free to experiment so that they develop their own abilities to solve problems"

Photonic/Gunnar Smoliansky

government initiatives on children and the family the report warns that they "still pussyfoot around the fundamental fact that the root cause of so much

dysfunction in individuals, in families, in schools, and in society as a whole is poor mental and emotional health."

June McKerrrow, director of the foundation, said risk-taking by children was an essential part of growing up, but the over-regimented lives imposed by worried parents had reduced

their opportunities to learn from their mistakes. "Children must be able to plan and take control, they must be allowed to try things

and be free to experiment so that they develop their own abilities to solve problems. "We know some things will go wrong and others will go

right and then they can choose where to place their energies." Ms McKerrrow said many social problems, such as unemployment, were beyond the power of governments to solve and people had to be emotionally prepared to cope with the consequences by extending their personal resources and interests.

Schools played a key role but there was "huge concern" about the narrowness of the National Curriculum. For primary school children, playing with their peers was an important part of their development, but this is under threat, she said.

"Teachers say they have had to cut the playtime of five-year-olds by up to half and drop singing lessons in order to make more time for arithmetic. There is no time to build emotional intelligence - it is all focused on the three Rs."

By changing social attitudes to children, many of the risks to their mental health could be reduced. But for those children who succumbed to the pressures and showed signs of failing to progress at school or found it difficult to make friends, early intervention was needed in the form of treatment, counselling, peer support or specific initiatives such as anti-bullying programmes.

"A fundamental shift in society is needed to accept that 'mental' health can be a positive as well as a negative state," Ms McKerrrow said.

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APR 19.9%

Women find home less satisfying

MORE WOMEN than ever before have become increasingly disenchanted with the state of their family life, according to a new survey published yesterday.

In the survey, conducted by the monthly women's magazine *Prima*, seven in ten said that home life was less satisfying than ever before, blaming lack of time and the cost of childcare. Forty-one per cent said they did not have enough time to fulfil their domestic and professional tasks satisfactorily, while 31 per cent said the Government should help by providing state-sponsored nurseries for working mothers. Some 80 per cent said tax relief was the best motive for marrying, and staying married.

The survey examined women's attitudes on a wide range of family issues. They were asked about the competing demands of children and work, single motherhood and the importance of marriage. There was strong support for marriage with 78 per cent describing it as vital for stable family life and 64 per cent saying divorce should be made more difficult.

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

Launching the survey, Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, said families were under more pressure than ever before. "Cherie and I have always tried to make sure we have time for each other and the kids," he said. "We do live in a goldfish bowl, so it's all the more important to keep your feet on the ground and try to make life as normal as possible for ourselves and the children."

Tessa Jowell, the Public Health minister, said: "The survey has captured a very clear snapshot of attitudes to family life in Britain today - a strong vote of confidence goes to family life and the importance of marriage."

The report, based on 1,000 replies, was part of a campaign by *Prima* that is intended to investigate all aspects of family life in Britain.

The magazine said the survey had posed "fundamental questions which offered the women of Britain the opportunity to help the Government develop strategies that will shape family life in the future".

Mobile phone failures exposed

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

MOBILE PHONE companies' coverage often does not match the promises of their advertising, according to a study produced for the telecommunications watchdog Ofcom.

Despite claims by the four main networks that they cover almost 100 per cent of the population, in practice making a phone call can be a frustrating experience with, for example, up to 25 per cent of calls being cut off during rail journeys for users of the Vodafone network. Even in cities, users of One 2 One's service can find that only 91 per cent work, which means that almost one phone call in 10 may "drop out" mid-sentence. The best on both counts was Orange, where 97 per cent of city calls and 89 per cent of rail calls were successful.

Ofcom commissioned the survey, from Freshfields Communications, after the networks refused to offer their own independent figures that might help prospective users to decide which was the best network. "There needs to be clarity so that people can compare the quality of service between networks to get the best deal," said Ofcom's director-general, David Edmunds.

He will repeat the survey

SUCCESS RATE

For all cities	Orange	One 2 One	Celnet	Vodafone
City calls	97%	91%	97%	97%
Rail journeys	89%	75%	89%	75%

Source: Freshfields Communications

unless the companies - Orange, One 2 One, Celnet and Vodafone - start offering such independent data themselves. The survey used computerised equipment to try to make 90-second calls in three cities - London, Edinburgh, and Cardiff - and on rail lines between London, Edinburgh, Crewe and Cardiff.

The railway coverage was noticeably variable. "On the trains in rural areas, much lower call success rates were experienced, which, of course, will contribute significantly to customer dissatisfaction on those routes," the report noted. The networks said that they are working on ways to offer comparative information.

سكرا من الاربع



Julie Ward: A second murder trial starts today 11 years after she died

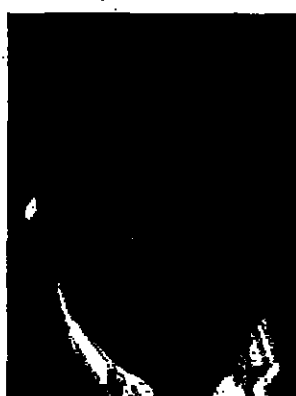
Father sees men stand trial for Ward murder

BY LUCY HANNAN
in Nairobi

AFTER 11 YEARS of extraordinary perseverance, John Ward will see the trial of his daughter's alleged murderers open in the Nairobi High Court today. "I am content because everything has been done now that could be done, and the stage is set for a fair and open trial," Mr Ward said of the event marking the end of an affair that has come to dominate his life.

Two men have been accused of the murder of Julie Ward, whose burnt remains were found in the Masai Mara Game Park, Kenya, in September 1988. Simon Ole Makallah, arrested last year, the former head warden at the reserve, has always been one of John Ward's chief suspects because of the ease with which he led Mr Ward's search party to Julie's abandoned Jeep, and then later to her remains. David Kandula Nchoka, arrested in January, was a clerk at Sands River Camp in the Masai Mara, and one of the last to see her alive. He forged her signature on his books, claiming she left the park in a hurry.

The trial starting today is likely to be temporarily adjourned so that the two cases can be joined together.



Simon Ole Makallah, (left)



David Kandula Nchoka and John Ward



Mr Ward has rented an apartment near the city centre. A successful businessman, who reckons to have spent more than £1m on the case, he expressed some unease about the state of the small, poorly furnished rooms, but said he hoped the privacy they afforded would encourage his wife, Jan, to come from Suffolk for the trial. "I'm very tired and weary of it all," he said.

He believes the murder could have been solved much earlier "if our little team had been sent down to the Masai Mara". The highly personal role John Ward has taken in the investigation is something the court will have to consider.

After initially exposing incompetence and a string of cover-ups - including a pathologist's report that was altered to claim that Julie was eaten by wild animals - Mr Ward's dogged pursuit, generous personal resources and Western expatriate status eventually led to him becoming an official member of a special new police team set up by the Kenyan Attorney General.

He has conducted interrogations, pursued leads, exposed "serial liars", has laid to rest conspiracy theories put about by members of Kenya's opposition parties, and has forced the country's inefficient and corrupt justice system to

take on a case that it longed to drop. With only a little irony, he occasionally refers to himself as "PC Ward".

Mr Ward has explored the underbelly of government, politics and justice in a country burdened by authoritarianism and corruption, and he has had to make difficult decisions to survive the course. "I had to make it clear that I was interested in the actual murder, not in those who tried to cover up; that's a Kenyan problem," he said. He says this compromise was crucial for the success of the investigation.

Murder - and cover-up - has already been proved in the trial of two innocent rangers in

1982. A judge at that time remarked that it was ominous that it took a foreigner "to stir the Kenya police out of its lethargy" and called a cover-up by the police a "blatant abuse of the institutions of justice". The judge said many questions were left unanswered regarding the role of Simon Makallah and David Nchoka - now in the dock.

The issue now is whether 11 years on there is sufficient evidence to convict the men. DNA samples tested in Britain and America have come to nothing, including strands of blond hair, which turned out not to be Julie's. Mr Ward took a last sample to the US just before Christmas, but says he expects no surprises.

"We're proving a negative and cutting off any last option," he said. Of about 40 witnesses on call, six are expected to come from Britain.

While insisting the case has "put Kenyan justice on trial", Mr Ward says he has full confidence, this time round, in the integrity of "a good old fashioned" police team, the judge and the lawyers.

He hopes for a conviction. But it may well be that real justice would have to be an acquittal. Mr Ward says he would be happy with that, too.

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Geisha girls wooed IOC in Britain

A JAPANESE delegation from Nagano spent 240m yen (£1m) entertaining Olympic officials in Birmingham, days before it was chosen to host last year's Winter Olympics, according to Japanese newspapers.

The expenses, covered the costs of almost 196 visitors from Nagano, including 100 wearing female attendants who entertained members of the International Olympic Committee in 1991 during five days of parties and receptions at Highbury House, the former home of Neville Chamberlain.

A report in yesterday's *Mainichi* newspaper, based on notes said to have been leaked by a former member of the bid committee, contradicts claims by Nagano officials that they burnt all the documents relating to the city's successful bid. It says that 1740m was spent by the committee in 1991, most of it in the three months leading up to the final vote in Birmingham in June.

The money was spent on first-class air fares and a week of hotel accommodation for the Japanese delegates. Five million yen went on a private train chartered to take the IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, from Tokyo to Nagano one month before the city's victory.

Apart from its excessive cost, the entertaining violated IOC rules that ban bidding organisations from holding parties during Olympic meetings. Last week, the Nagano mayor, Tasuku Tsukada, admitted there may have been "excesses" during the city's bid.

Mr Tsukada's has always claimed that the accounts of the bid were burnt after the committee wound up its business in

BY RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Tokyo

1992. Yesterday's revelations will fuel rumours in Nagano that some of the documents may still be hidden somewhere.

Last month, a member of Mr Tsukada's city assembly told *The Independent* that "astronomical" sums had been spent on the bid and that bribes had been paid to IOC members in cash and gifts. He also said that as recently as 14 January, the mayor was intending to burn further documents.

This is denied by Mr Tsukada and supporters of the mayor who were present at the meeting, and no specific allegations of bribery have been proved. But there is growing concern about the extravagant hospitality with which visiting IOC delegates were entertained.

Sixty-two committee members, many of them accompanied by their families, were flown to Japan and whisked around the country at a cost of ¥2m-¥3m each. They were entertained by geisha, transported in chartered helicopters and taken on sightseeing tours of the ancient city of Kyoto at the expense of the Nagano bidding committee, which was 40 per cent public funded.

Mr Tsukada hinted last month that Nagano was put under pressure to provide such luxuries. "At the time, we were in a position of getting them to choose us, so it was difficult to refuse the demands of the IOC members," he said.

Mystery surrounds a hand-made Japanese sword, which Nagano officials say they gave to Mr Samaranch. The IOC says it has no record of the gift.

Tintin's politics confuses French

FRENCH MPs held a 90-minute debate yesterday on whether the cartoon hero Tintin was right-wing or left-wing.

At least 16 foreign television channels filmed the debate held in the National Assembly, which formed part of celebrations to mark the 70th birthday of the boy reporter created by Belgian Georges Remi under the pen name of Hergé.

Closely watched by the Belgian ambassador and Hergé's widow, deputies argued heatedly for two hours without reaching firm conclusions.

Some argued that Tintin was right-wing at least in his first appearance, when he visited the Soviet Union in a book that seemed crudely anti-Communist. They said he was still

right-wing when he visited the Congo and mocked Africans. But he had turned into a left-winger, a friend of the Third World and an ally of oppressed nations by the time he travelled to South America in Tintin in Piccolo Country and China in *The Blue Lotus*.

Yann Galut, a member of the French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin's Socialist Party, praised Tintin's policy on drugs, but was careful to distance himself from the young scribe's policy on Africa, which he described as "paternalistic".

Tintin remains hugely popular in France. The country's former leader, General De Gaulle, once grumbled that "deep down, my only international rival is Tintin". (Reuters)

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صكزا من الدليل

UN orders all Britons and Americans out of Iraq

THE UNITED Nations revealed last night that it has ordered all American and British nationals working for it in Iraq to leave the country as soon as possible because of fears for their safety.

The move further illustrates the depth of distrust between the UN and the leadership in Baghdad following the bombing of Iraq by the US and Britain in December and the continuing pounding of Iraqi defence sites

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

in the northern and southern "no-fly" zones. Fred Eckhard, UN spokesman, said the decision had been taken yesterday following "specific threats" to nationals of the UN's humanitarian programme in Iraq. He said that at least two US citizens were immediately involved. While there are about

10 British UN officials assigned to the programme, all of them were already outside Iraq last night on leave, an official said. The UN's decision, taken by Benon Sevan, the chief of the humanitarian affairs division, stems from a letter sent by the Iraqi leadership to New York on 4 January saying that the safety of British and American officials working in the country could no longer be guaranteed. Officially, the UN responded

by telling Iraq that it had no right to dictate the composition of UN teams working there. The British Government quickly expressed alarm to the UN, however, and asked Mr Sevan to respond quickly to the letter. Officials last night said that Mr Sevan, assisted by the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, have attempted behind-the-scenes diplomacy with Baghdad to persuade it to withdraw the threat to the Britons and Amer-

icans that was implied in the letter and to guarantee that they would be protected. Yesterday's decision signalled, however, that Iraq refused to bend. There are other Britons working in the country for non-governmental organisations not formally linked to the UN. Most of those are in the northern Kurdish region, where Baghdad has limited control. While the UN decision could

be interpreted as a climbdown in the face of Iraqi belligerence, it is unlikely to be questioned by London or Washington. The final decision on the welfare of UN personnel, rests with Mr Sevan and the Secretary General. Iraq, meanwhile, continues to refuse to allow the re-entry into its country of the weapons inspectors working for Unscm, the UN body charged with hunting down its weapons of mass

destruction. Under UN resolutions, the Security Council cannot lift sanctions against Iraq until Unscm has certified that it is free of all such weapons. "All United States and United Kingdom nationals working for the United Nations should leave the country," Mr Eckhard said making the announcement. Insisting that the final decision rested with Mr Sevan, he added: "The specific threats were to these two nationalities so it was

the security co-ordinator's call." US officials revealed meanwhile that more Iraqi defence installations have been destroyed by missiles from allied jets over the no-fly zones in the last few weeks than during all of the four-day Cruise missile bombardment of last December. Iraq yesterday began moving some of its anti-aircraft systems out of the no-fly zones to central Iraq to protect them from attack.

Clinton called Monica 'stalker'

REPUBLICANS AND Democrats were preparing to rejoin battle in the US Senate today, armed with three days of witness testimony that appeared to have advanced the case against President Clinton not a whit.

With the public clamouring for an end to the impeachment trial, according to a New York Times poll, and Republicans undecided about how to proceed, the stage was set for more bickering before any conclusion is reached.

Yesterday's witness, the third and last, was Sidney Blumenthal, known as the White House spinmeister and a friend of Hillary Clinton. A journalist for The Washington Post and The New Yorker before joining the White House, he was expected to be questioned about a conversation in which Mr Clinton reportedly described Ms Lewinsky as a stalker who had "come on to" him.

The purpose of this line of questioning was to establish whether Mr Clinton had expected, or perhaps instructed, Mr Blumenthal to disseminate negative information about Ms Lewinsky after news of their affair broke. As Ms Lewinsky had by then been called a witness in Paula Jones's sexual harassment suit against the President and Mr Blumenthal could expect to be a witness in the Lewinsky investigation, such a move could amount to obstructing the course of justice and tampering with witnesses.

He was questioned in the same secure committee room

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

at the top of the Capitol where Mr Clinton's friend Vernon Jordan had been the previous day. His interrogator was James Rogan, a California Republican who was one of the most aggressive members of the House Judiciary Committee in last year's impeachment hearings. He is one of 13 House Republicans selected to present the prosecution's case in the Senate.

Mr Jordan was questioned by the milder-mannered Asa Hutchinson, of Arkansas, and the prosecutor chosen to question Monica Lewinsky on Monday was the most homey of all, Ed Bryant, from Tennessee.

His performance was criticised yesterday by some senators who had seen the videotaped interview of Ms Lewinsky's testimony, who accused him of hesitancy and getting facts wrong.

Although prosecutors had hoped one or all their chosen witnesses would add information to earlier evidence that strengthened the case against Mr Clinton, the information furnished out of the Senate, whose members are sworn to secrecy about the testimony, indicated that only the barest details had been added.

Ms Lewinsky was said to have stuck to her original version, while impressing senators as highly credible. According to Senator Larry Craig of Idaho, a Republican, she had mixed



Sidney Blumenthal, known as the White House 'spinmeister', leaving the Capitol after testifying

AFP

feelings about Mr Clinton. "It's obvious this is a lady who at one point in time had very strong feelings for the President," he said.

Mr Jordan was said to have added only two details to his earlier evidence, acknowledging, for instance, specific phone calls and a breakfast with Ms Lewinsky for which the prosecutors had obtained written

records. But he continued to have "forgotten" key details and specifically denied advising Ms Lewinsky to destroy draft love letters to the President.

The first clashes today are likely to centre on whether the witness testimony, which was videotaped, should be made public. Republicans tend to say that it should; Democrats not. The Senate Minority Leader,

Tom Daschle, said yesterday that it should be all or nothing. "If you are going to air a deposition, you'd better air the full thing," he told reporters.

But his preference was for nothing. "The public," he said, "is saying over and over... that they want this trial to end."

The chief concern of Democrats, with the White House,

is still to prevent the appearance of "live" witnesses before the Senate, though the tide appeared to be turning in their favour. While Republican House prosecutors said they would continue to press for "live" witnesses, Mr Hutchinson conceded: "I think the Senators are going to be satisfied with the videotapes. It's going to be tough to make that case."

US to join Nato force in Kosovo

AS PRESSURE intensified on Yugoslavia to send delegates to the Kosovo peace talks, which are due to start near Paris on Saturday, Nato countries were yesterday working out details of a peace-keeping force, of between 20,000 and 30,000 men, including a small, but significant, US contingent.

Under plans being finalised by European and American officials, Britain would make the largest single contribution, of 8,000 men, to the force which would only be deployed if ethnic Albanians and Serbs reach a settlement at Rambouillet. France is understood to be offering up to 6,000 troops, Germany 3,000 and Russia, the Netherlands and the Nordic countries a further 3,000 between them.

The crux however is the US contribution, controversial in Congress but seen as crucial for the credibility of the peace-keeping operation and as a guarantee that Washington was in for the long haul in ensuring that the autonomy deal worked. William Cohen, the US Defense Secretary, assured the Senate Armed Services Committee that a "relatively small" US ground force could be sent, assuming a deal is struck in Rambouillet. General Henry Shelton, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, suggested a contingent of 2,000 to 4,000 American troops.

Mr Cohen was speaking a day after the CIA director, George Tenet, warned that even if an agreement was reached, Nato ground troops would be needed to stave off the risk of a wider war in the spring. As have his opposite numbers in London and Paris, the Defense Secretary flatly opposed an invasion of Kosovo by Nato to impose a peace in what planners jargon calls a "non-permissive environment".

Last night, plans were going ahead for the Rambouillet conference to start as scheduled, under the joint chairmanship of Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and the French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine. After the decisions of the political and military representatives of the Kosovo Albanians to attend, only the assent of the Serbian and Yugoslav governments is lacking. Although President Slobodan Milosevic has given conflicting signals, the surprisingly thorough and even-handed coverage of the Contact Group proposals in the Belgrade press makes Western officials fairly confident that, after some suitable suspense, he will agree to send delegations. "They ran our statement in full. The only thing they changed was that they had been 'invited', not 'summoned' to the conference," one Western diplomat said. It is most unlikely that Mr Milosevic, who was again warned explicitly by Washington that he faced Nato airstrikes if he did not comply, will attend in person. The Serbian delegation could be headed by Milan Milutinovic, Serbia's President, while the federal Yugoslav team could be led by Mr Milosevic's deputy, Nikola Sainovic. The draft peace plan, in which only minor changes will be permitted during the negotiations, will turn Kosovo into something approaching a protectorate. The OSCE monitoring mission would have wide powers and will supervise elections within nine months. Though Kosovo will not be granted full independence, the Serbian government will lose almost all its authority over the province, which will have its own assembly and police force. The agreement runs for an interim period of three years, after which the final status of Kosovo will be determined.

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

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Although President Slobodan Milosevic has given conflicting signals, the surprisingly thorough and even-handed coverage of the Contact Group proposals in the Belgrade press makes Western officials fairly confident that, after some suitable suspense, he will agree to send delegations. "They ran our statement in full. The only thing they changed was that they had been 'invited', not 'summoned' to the conference," one Western diplomat said. It is most unlikely that Mr Milosevic, who was again warned explicitly by Washington that he faced Nato airstrikes if he did not comply, will attend in person.

The Serbian delegation could be headed by Milan Milutinovic, Serbia's President, while the federal Yugoslav team could be led by Mr Milosevic's deputy, Nikola Sainovic. The draft peace plan, in which only minor changes will be permitted during the negotiations, will turn Kosovo into something approaching a protectorate. The OSCE monitoring mission would have wide powers and will supervise elections within nine months. Though Kosovo will not be granted full independence, the Serbian government will lose almost all its authority over the province, which will have its own assembly and police force. The agreement runs for an interim period of three years, after which the final status of Kosovo will be determined.



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Fur flies over Beverly Hills coat warning

TRYING to tell the pampered citizens of Beverly Hills not to wear fur coats is like trying to tell Romans not to eat pasta. But that does not mean, in this land of limitless possibility, that someone isn't going to try.

Thus it was that a group called Beverly Hills Consumers for Informed Choices interrupted a city council meeting on Tuesday night with a demand that all furs sold there should carry a warning tag detailing the gruesome way in which coats make their way from the backs of mink to the racks of fashion boutiques.

Since the consumer group had collected the signatures of 3,300 registered voters - about 10 per cent of the Beverly Hills population - the council had no choice but to put the issue to the people in a special ballot to be held on 11 May. If passed, the furriers of Beverly Hills will have to attach the following note to every coat they sell:

"Consumer notice: This product is made with fur from animals that may have been killed by electrocution, gassing, neck breaking, poisoning, clubbing, stomping or drowning and may have been trapped in steel-jaw, leg-hold traps."

Naturally the shop-owners of Rodeo Drive and the other prestigious addresses of Beverly Hills are getting a little hot under their pelt and sable collars. "This is just one more attempt by the extreme animal activists to generate publicity to

BY ANDREW GUMBEL
in Los Angeles

hurt the fur industry," said Douglas Fine, manager of Somper Furs on Canon Drive.

The consumer group has more than righteous rage up its sleeve, though: it also has a surreptitiously recorded videotape in which several Beverly Hills shop assistants are caught telling customers, misleadingly, that the furs' original, animal owners were killed by humane means such as lethal injection.

"The label lists a variety of methods by which the animals may or may not have been put down," said Teresa Platt, executive director of Fur Commission USA, which represents fur farmers. "Imagine if such a label were required for meat or medicine - the list is endless."

Alarming warnings are nothing new in southern California, however. Visitors to Beverly Hills' Four Seasons Hotel are confronted with this startling announcement at the front entrance: "Warning: this area contains toxic materials known to the state of California to cause birth defects, cancer and other reproductive harm."

Although left unexplained, this notice - imposed on all public buildings by a recent statewide ballot - refers to the fact that smoking is permitted inside. Next to cancer and deformed babies, who can object to the mention of a little animal stomping?

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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Wolves confident of Marston win

WOLVERHAMPTON & DUDLEY, the regional brewer, last night appeared confident of winning control of rival Marston Thompson & Evershed as earlier indications suggested that at least one large shareholder had accepted its £280m offer. Sources close to W&D said their offer, which closes this afternoon, had been well received and a number of City analysts were advising clients to vote for it. One shareholder in Marston, which launched an unprecedented £177m bid for W&D, was understood to have accepted the offer. Marston, the brewer of Padigree bitter, said the result was too close to call because several investors were still undecided.

Water chiefs fear tougher price cap



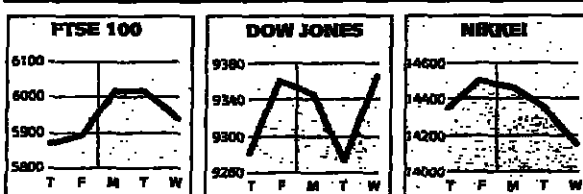
WATER COMPANY chiefs are growing increasingly concerned that the industry regulator will impose an even tougher price cap on them than expected, reducing their profits by a further £250m a year.

They fear that when Ian Byatt of Ofwat (pictured) publishes his final price controls this summer, he will limit the water industry's return on capital to as little as 4 per cent. This would reduce the average household bill by a further £8.50 on top of the £40 cut Mr Byatt already envisages. But it would cost the industry between £200m and £250m in reduced revenues.

£1m package for KPMG chief

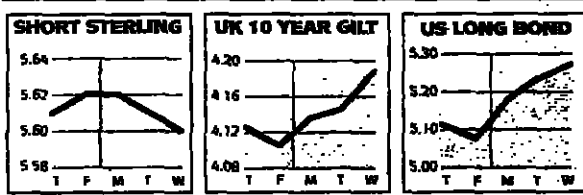
COLIN SHARMAN, the international chairman of the professional services firm KPMG, received total pay of more than £1m last year, according to the firm's annual report and accounts published today. Mr Sharmman, who retains his international role, retired as senior partner of the UK practice when the financial year ended on 30 September 1998. In that period, he saw his executive remuneration increase from £510,000 to £665,000.

STOCK MARKETS



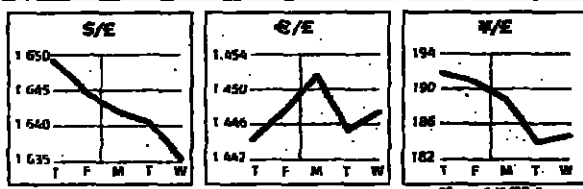
Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Year High (%)
FTSE 100	5940.30	-72.70	-1.21	6195.60	4599.20	2.72
FTSE 250	3113.20	-21.10	-0.68	3270.90	2427.60	3.17
FTSE 350	2826.40	-29.30	-1.03	2989.10	2210.40	2.79
FTSE All Share	2730.31	-26.17	-0.95	2886.52	2143.53	2.84
FTSE SmallCap	2182.50	12.70	0.59	2793.80	1834.40	3.71
FTSE Pharmaceuticals	1200.50	4.30	0.36	1517.10	1046.20	4.30
FTSE AIM	826.70	-1.40	-0.17	1146.90	761.30	1.21
FTSE Eurotop 100	2768.61	-42.43	-1.51	3079.27	2018.15	2.14
FTSE Eurotop 300	1205.16	-15.54	-1.27	1332.07	890.63	2.00
Dow Jones	9266.81	-82.65	-0.89	9647.95	7460.50	1.64
Nikkei	14161.31	-186.52	-1.31	17352.35	12787.90	1.03
Hang Seng	9419.85	-82.87	-0.87	11926.16	6544.79	3.74
Dax	5085.66	-81.21	-1.57	6217.83	3833.71	1.69
S&P 500	1272.03	-10.02	-0.79	1383.64	923.32	1.25
Nasdaq	2493.16	-29.74	-1.21	2533.44	1357.09	0.27
Toronto 300	6721.40	37.62	0.56	7837.70	5320.90	1.60
Brazil Bovespa	8676.03	-55.67	-0.64	12339.14	4575.69	7.25
Belgium Bel20	3440.47	-14.72	-0.43	3718.21	2585.74	2.06
Amsterdam AEX	527.12	-3.67	-0.69	600.69	364.58	1.87
France CAC 40	4188.84	-54.73	-1.29	4404.24	2881.21	1.93
Millan MIB30	34192.00	-431.00	-1.25	39170.00	24175.00	1.19
Madrid IBS 35	9944.20	0.60	0.01	10989.80	6869.90	1.86
Irish Allshare	5339.23	44.68	0.84	5581.70	3732.57	1.49
S Korea Comp	553.35	-13.95	-2.46	631.95	277.37	0.06
Australia ASX	2918.20	11.20	0.39	2929.60	2386.70	3.15

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	30 year
UK	5.80	-1.76	5.50	-1.98	4.19	-1.88	4.24	-1.61
US	4.97	-0.65	5.10	-0.56	4.84	0.72	5.27	0.60
Japan	0.49	-0.34	0.51	-0.30	2.82	0.39	3.48	0.83
Germany	3.10	-0.43	3.01	-0.78	3.73	-1.33	4.67	-0.59

CURRENCIES



Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year	15 year	30 year
Dollar	1.6390	-0.54c	1.6461	0.6116	-0.55p	0.6075		
Euro	1.4462	-0.21c	1.4079	1.3900	-0.51c	1.1665		
Yen	184.68	-0.71	207.25	113.03	-0.96	125.82		
E index	100.30	-0.40	105.10	104.50	0.00	109.00		

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Chg	% Chg	Index	Close	Chg	% Chg
Brent Oil (\$)	10.46	0.00	0.00	GDP (US)	115.40	3.00	112.04
Gold (\$)	287.55	-0.90	-0.31	RPI	164.40	2.80	159.92
Silver (\$)	5.34	0.26	4.89	Base Rates	6.00	7.25	

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.4653	Mexican (nuevo peso)	14.99
Austria (schillings)	19.25	Netherlands (guilders)	3.0853
Belgium (francs)	56.60	New Zealand (\$)	2.8647
Canada (\$)	2.4100	Norway (kroner)	12.12
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8107	Portugal (escudos)	279.53
Denmark (kroner)	10.46	Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.9601
Finland (markka)	8.3547	Singapore (\$)	2.6379
France (francs)	9.1983	South Africa (rand)	9.4747
Germany (marks)	2.7521	Spain (pesetas)	232.96
Greece (drachma)	449.86	Sweden (kronor)	12.55
Hong Kong (\$)	12.29	Switzerland (francs)	2.2520
Ireland (pounds)	1.1019	Thailand (bahts)	54.49
India (rupees)	62.46	Turkey (liras)	527.33
Israel (shekels)	6.1507	USA (\$)	1.5979
Italy (lira)	2725		
Japan (yen)	180.13		
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.9138		
Malta (lira)	0.6087		

Takeover Panel throws out GUS appeal

THE TAKEOVER Panel yesterday unanimously dismissed an appeal by Great Universal Stores relating to its successful £1.9bn bid for Argos last year.

The panel ruled that GUS had no right to appeal against an earlier decision by the panel's executive, which said that the Argos board and its advisers had not breached the code on takeovers during the bid and had not made statements that were misleading. The panel said GUS had missed the one-month deadline for such appeals and that it should have been told as much by advisers. "The right of appeal must have been well known to GUS (and certainly to its advisers) at the time and yet they did not appeal," the panel said. It is understood that GUS's chairman, Lord Wolfson, will not now carry out his threat to take legal action against the former Argos directors and the company's advisers, Schroders. It is also considered unlikely he will take his case to the

Department of Trade and Industry and House of Lords, as he had previously suggested.

However, GUS was unbowed yesterday, saying it still had several appeals outstanding with the panel over the Argos deal. Lord Wolfson said: "We believe that statements made by Argos during the course of the bid did not conform to these (the panel's) rules. To be ruled out of time, with the result that such substantive issues will not be reviewed by the panel, seems to us to be unreasonable."

The ruling comes a year to

the day after GUS launched its hostile bid for Argos. After it won with its raised £1.9bn offer, Lord Wolfson, complained to the panel that Argos's then directors and advisers had breached the rules with certain claims in the bid process. The complaints centred on claims made regarding the performance of the Argos stores in Holland and plans for a home delivery operation. The former Argos directors, including chief executive Stuart Rose, and Schroders, its advisers, denied any breach and

this view was upheld by the panel's executive. GUS went on the offensive yesterday by disclosing Schroders' £5.7m fixed fee for the Argos defence, with an additional 2.5 per cent of any value offered over 625p a share. It further questioned whether it was right that an additional £1.5bn would be payable in the event of a successful defence against a hostile bid. The panel said it would look at such "success fees" as well as the time period for complaints.

GUS's aggressive actions have surprised many in the City, who saw them as vindictive. Some have seen them as an attempt to find another party to blame after paying £1.9bn for a retail group at the peak of the market just ahead of a fall in consumer spending. Lord Wolfson has said he was acting on a "point of principle" and that he was seeking "a red card" for the Argos team and for the panel's rules to be tightened up. Outlook, page 17



Mr Major's new job is with Emerson Electric, which was criticised last year for aggressive takeover tactics in buying out the UK company Astec.

Major to advise company at centre of Astec furore

JOHN MAJOR, the former prime minister, has been appointed chairman of the European Advisory Council of Emerson Electric Company, the American group that provoked a storm of opposition in the City last year over its aggressive takeover tactics.

Emerson, an electronics giant based in St Louis, Missouri, was faced by legal action by 18 City institutions when it sought to buy out the minority shareholders in Astec, a UK listed company, in spring 1998. Mr Major already has an advisory role with another US company, Carlyle Group, based in Washington DC. Carlyle Group has been seeking a deal with Vickers, the British company, over the manufacture of armoured vehicles.

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

The ex-prime minister is still active politically, addressing the House of Commons on Tuesday on the proposed reform of the House of Lords. Mr Major's new job is likely to raise eyebrows in the City. Emerson had built a 51 per cent stake in Astec and then offered to buy out the rest at the prevailing market price of 111p. At the same time Emerson announced its intention to remove three Astec executive directors and replace them with Emerson appointees, while also voting to stop Astec's dividend payments. This prompted the 18 mainly British institutions which represented a quarter of Astec's shares to issue a statement saying they "protested vigorously at the tactics currently employed by Emerson in its attempt to wrest control from Astec's independent board".

The group included Clerical Medical, Electra Fleming Legal & General, Norwich Union and Royal & Sun Alliance. They challenged Emerson's tactics in the courts, but lost. Emerson retreated and then quietly bought the remaining Astec shares at the end of last year. An Emerson spokesman said Mr Major's new role was "designed to advise Emerson on the changing business climate in Europe. He will be paid, but the amount is confidential. The Advisory Council will meet two or three times a year and Mr Major may be consulted on an ad hoc basis."

Quarterly point rate cut today

A SERIES of gloomy business surveys published yesterday fuelled speculation that the Bank of England would today deliver its fifth successive cut in interest rates, writes Lea Paterson. The Bank's Monetary Policy Committee gives its decision at midday with most in the City expecting another quarter-point cut. This would take rates to 5.75 per cent, their lowest for almost three years. Fresh evidence yesterday of weak retail spending and a slowdown in the service sector strengthened the case for further cuts, said City analysts. The speculation sent sterling lower against the euro: the pound weakened 0.28p to 69.26p. The Confederation of British Industry's monthly distributive trades survey was weaker than anticipated, with 38 per cent of retailers saying sales in January were lower than a

year ago, while 29 per cent said sales were higher. Alastair Eperon of the CBI said: "The drop in volumes in January dashed hopes of a lift from new year sales activity." The monthly Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) report on services found that the sector shrank in January for the third successive month. CIPS said the benchmark purchasing managers' index (PMI) registered 48.6 in January, compared to 47.4 in December. Any PMI reading below 50 indicates the sector is contracting. However, the increase in the index between December and January suggests that the rate of contraction is slowing. Several analysts cautioned against reading too much into the surveys, which tend to fluctuate markedly from month to month.

SG Paribas covets UK's high bank charges

SG PARIBAS, France's new £10bn financial giant, yesterday said it would more than double its profitability if it could levy the same high charges on customers as British banks.

Daniel Bouton, vice chairman of SG Paribas, said: "We would have a return on equity of 40 per cent if we worked with the prices and margins you have in the UK market."

BY ANDREW GARFIELD

Financial Editor. Currently, French banks, including Société Générale, which this week merged with Paribas to create the new French banking group, enjoy a return on equity of only 15 per cent, against Lloyds-TSB's 30 per cent. M Bouton's claims came just

a week after Don Cruickshank, the former telecoms watchdog, launched a year-long UK government-sponsored inquiry into the competitiveness of British banks. Mr Bouton said Société Générale was in fact far more efficient than its British rivals, but was less profitable than comparable British banks because of unfair competition

from state and mutual-owned banks kept banking margins in France unacceptably low. He said he believed that Barclays and Lloyds-TSB were both looking to break into France by acquisition. But he warned the UK players that their experience in Britain did not prepare them for the tougher realities in France. "You [in Britain] have a very

special situation because of the high returns made by the predominantly retail banks," he said. The problem for the banks in France, he said, was not so much getting costs down, as these were already relatively low, but to raise the income line. At a meeting with the bank's 4,100 London-based staff last

night, the two heads of the combined bank dismissed talk of job cuts of 20 per cent as scaremongering put about by headhunters. A three-person committee was yesterday set up to oversee the integration of the investment bank. They will in turn appoint 15 working groups to advise them on specific areas of business.

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

AFTER A three-day winning run Footsie lost ground, giving up 72.7 points to 5,940.3p. Even the mid cap index, in rampant form lately, suffered a modest setback. Trading was again heavy, with turnover reaching 1.1 billion shares. The market discounted the possibility of yet lower interest rates, paying more attention to gloomy comments from the Confederation of British Industry. British Airways was one Footsie constituent to ride out the caution, gaining 16p to 374.5p. Derek Pain, page 21

NEW YORK

STOCKS rose for the first time in three days after the Federal Reserve left benchmark interest rates unchanged, fuelling confidence that profits would rise as the economy grows with little inflation. Online brokerages surged, and Intel led a rally in semiconductor shares after forming ventures with Mattel and Analog Devices. The Dow Jones gained 92.69 points, or 1 per cent, to 9,368.31. The S&P 500 gained 10.08 to 1,272.07 and the Nasdaq climbed 28.99, or 1.2 per cent, to 2,493.41.

TOKYO

STOCKS FELL for the third successive day, with the rising yen and falling bonds undermining sentiment. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index closed down 188.52 points, or 1.31 per cent, at 14,161.31. March futures slid 80 points to 14,220. Global blue chips, including Sony, Honda and Canon, suffered from the yen's appreciation. Falling bonds hit shares in banks, major holders of government debt. Sumitomo Rubber bucked the trend, jumping almost 8 per cent on news of its planned link with the US tyre giant Goodyear.

FRANKFURT

PROFIT-taking ahead of yesterday's US interest-rate decision undermined German stocks. The electronically traded Xetra DAX ended down 74.88 points, or 1.45 per cent, at 5,090.07. The floor DAX fell 1.57 per cent to 5,085.66 points. One trader said: "Domestic players aren't doing anything and we're basically waiting for what happens in America." Bank stocks - which chalked up solid gains earlier in the week following the SocGen/Paribas link-up - were among the major fallers.

SAO PAULO

SHARES ended weaker as profit-taking continued on the back of a calm foreign exchange market, which also drove away buyers who had sought to make money on the back of a weaker real. The blue-chip Bovespa index lost 0.64 per cent to finish at 8,676 points, after reaching a session high of 8,697. The market belatedly waited for what happens in America. "It's time for profit-taking. Things are no longer rough, with the real/dollar rate stabilising and interest rates steady," said a trader.

GUS complaint leaves a sour taste

IT WAS THE first anniversary yesterday of the launch of Great Universal Stores' hostile bid for the catalogue retailer Argos. It was also the day on which the Takeover Panel chose to throw out the complaint subsequently brought by the GUS chairman, Lord Wolfson, over tactics used by Argos and its advisers, Schroders, in the unsuccessful bid defence.



OUTLOOK

Perhaps the panel is trying to make a point. In the eyes of some, Lord Wolfson's initial complaint to the Takeover Panel's executive last May was petulant and vindictive, not to mention offensive and a waste of time. The executive concluded in June that no breach of the City Takeover Code had taken place. But Lord Wolfson is not the sort to take no for an answer and decided eventually to appeal against the executive's ruling to the full panel.

His actions smacked then of a man who had overpaid for the business and was seeking to take it out on someone else. They still do, as yesterday's eight-page rant from the GUS camp against the ruling amply demonstrates.

The panel, of course, is too polite to say as much. So instead it has

If that was the case, it is odd that he should have personally pursued four Argos directors, most of whom are now out of a job, writing a four-page letter containing the thinly veiled threat of legal action.

A less charitable but more plausible interpretation of Lord Wolfson's actions was that he was seeking to get a favourable ruling from the panel under his belt as a prelude to taking the four directors and Schroders to the courts and thence to the cleaners.

Along the way, he has made few friends. For the first time in the panel's 31-year existence, he chose to question the impartiality of the executive's director-general, Alistair Duff, on the grounds that he is on secondment from SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the brokers to Argos. Presumably Lord Wolfson overlooked the fact that Warburg is also GUS's principal adviser.

The one crumb of comfort Lord Wolfson can take is that the panel has promised to look at the practice of investment banks being paid a higher success fee in the event of fighting off a hostile bid - as was the case with Schroders.

But otherwise, the entire episode leaves a sour taste in the mouth.

Today Lord Wolfson ought to feel just a little chastened as well as a little wiser, but the betting is he won't.

ERM poser

WHAT A SHAME it is when the cool reasoning of economics is disrupted by the dirty realism of politics. The new offensive by the European Commission to get the UK into the post-euro version of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism could be seen as pure mischief-making, given the realities of British politics.

The penalty the Conservatives paid in opinion polls for the 1992 ERM disaster means no British government will ever be willing to take the pound back into a formal mechanism as a prelude to joining the single currency. Ministers and officials insist that it is not a requirement of the Maastricht Treaty, and that a period of reasonable exchange rate stability between the pound and the euro will be enough.

the single currency will not cause undue strain. Gordon Brown's five tests, including the impact on jobs and investment and the degree of flexibility in the economy, are laughably vague and judgemental. But they nevertheless capture what really matters in the big euro decision in a way the formal Maastricht criteria never did.

However, if our friends in Brussels do decide to make a fuss about the formality of the pound's membership in the ERM, as opposed to the reality of its behaviour for the next couple of years, the only purpose can be to exert pressure on the UK in other ways. This could well turn out to be faster movement towards fiscal harmonisation than Britain might otherwise desire.

Although it carries its own difficulties, opinion inside ERMland has swung decisively in favour of faster integration on this front. Both Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French finance minister, and Oskar Lafontaine, his German counterpart, have signalled their desire for it. First-wave members will want new members to keep up.

incredibly successful launch of the new currency, a sensible policy debate about British membership of the euro looks as remote as ever.

Pension chaos

MYSTIFIED ABOUT pensions? Anyone planning for their retirement in the past few years would be forgiven for feeling overwhelmed. Just as they start coming to terms with one new assortment of initials and proposals on the pension front, along comes another to confuse them even further.

As if to confirm everyone's belief that pensions are far too complicated for common mortals, the Treasury yesterday published plans for yet another investment "vehicle" we will be allowed to use for our retirement planning.

This so far unnamed new model (don't call it a Lisa, the bureaucrats hate the term), aims to be more flexible than both the occupational pensions already available from most large employers, and the stakeholder pensions announced in December. Most of us will, however, struggle to see the unique selling proposition.

By giving pooled investments from unit and investment trust funds the same tax breaks as ordinary pension schemes, the Government is hoping to create a new breed of cheap, flexible pension that we will be able to start and stop at will, without incurring heavy charges.

Treasury ministers seem to hope that by doing so, they will kill off the existing personal pensions system, in which life companies offer expensive products with heavy surrender penalties. The idea is that insurers will be forced to compete on price with more competitive unit and investment trusts.

Nothing wrong with that, it might be said. However, clarity and simplicity are usually the most important things when it comes to investment, and on this front the new Government doesn't seem to be making much progress. The proposed changes replicate many features already available elsewhere with personal pensions.

The Treasury seems only to be creating more confusion on the pension front. The only really exciting thing about the proposals was the name Lisa - and now they even want to take that away.

IN BRIEF

Granada creates 2,500 new jobs

GRANADA, the media and hotels group, is to create over 2,500 jobs in its roadside catering and Travelodge businesses as it expands its leisure operations.

The news came as a Granada statement at its annual meeting yesterday said current trading was "very positive". However, the company dismissed speculation that it might target Whitbread as an acquisition, stressing that the company's priority was organic growth.

Global tyre giant

GOODYEAR, the US tyre giant, yesterday merged its worldwide operations with Sumitomo Rubber of Japan creating the world's largest tyre maker with sales of \$15.5bn (£9.6bn).

The US company will be the dominant partner and will control the European and US businesses of the enlarged group after paying \$936m to Sumitomo. The link will lead to 2,600 job losses in Goodyear's US workforce.

Synstar to float

ROGER FERRE, chief executive of Synstar, and four fellow directors are expected to own shares worth around £15m when the computer services group joins the London Stock Exchange in March after less than 18 months in private hands.

Synstar, a management buyout from Granada for £80m in September 1997, may be valued at £200m.

3i's campaign

3i, the venture capital group, is to launch a lobby campaign to convince shareholders in rival Electra to accept its £1.2bn offer. 3i is expected to urge the investment trust's main shareholders to put pressure on the Electra board to agree to a takeover.

Lucas reassures

LUCASVARIETY yesterday reassured its 50,000 retired employees that their pensions would not be put at risk by the company's sale to a US rival.

Lucas wrote to all its pensioners to tell them that the union fears of a raid by a US buyer on its pension fund surplus - valued at up to £1.2bn - were unfounded. Lucas has agreed to a £4bn takeover by the US engineering group TRW.



The book wholesaler, Bertrams, and the public library book supplier Cypher are joining forces to form a new book wholesale venture, Bertram Group, backed by £54m of equity funding from Mercury Asset Management Private Equity. From left: Julian Rivers and Raymond Grey of Bertram Group and Jeremy Sharman of Mercury

US brokers seek to curb Internet frenzy

THE AMERICAN securities industry is seeking ways to curb wild swings in Internet-related stocks as investors continue their frenzied pursuit of profits, many of them trading online from home computers without advice from specialist brokers.

Wall Street has reeled in recent months from the impact of galloping Internet stocks and soaring popularity of online trading. Trading over the Web rose 34 per cent in the last quarter of last year. About one in seven stock trades in the US are now conducted in cyberspace.

Latest estimates show that online trading in January may have leapt by between 25 and 50 per cent. Most of the increase was due to the seemingly unstoppable interest of individual investors in Internet stocks such as Amazon.com and

to most hi-tech listings, has considered rules that would allow it to suspend trading in individual stocks when prices move too fast on a single day. But a Nasdaq panel yesterday rejected the proposal, as some brokers voiced concern about how the halts would be triggered and whether they would worsen price swings.

At the same time the Securities and Exchange Commission has been deluged with complaints from investors about faltering service from online brokerages. Most problems have been caused by websites simply unable to cope with demand. Yesterday E-Trade, the number three online brokerage, suffered a freezing of its site and had to apologise to customers.

As demand grows, the online dealing jam may get much worse before it gets better.

BT to invest £5bn on making network faster for millions

MILLIONS OF UK households will sign up to high-speed Internet services from British Telecom by 2004 as part of a £5bn, five-year investment programme, the telephone giant predicted yesterday.

Sir Peter Bonfield, BT's chief executive, said he expected "several million" residential customers to sign up for the service over the next five years.

BT is currently preparing to offer a technology called ADSL, which allows ordinary copper telephone wires to carry data to its residential customers at speeds up to 40 times faster than the best available modem.

The move follows the completion of a trial involving 2,000 customers in west London, which the company says has gone well. Industry observers

expect the technology to be formally launched nationally later this year.

"We are very positive about BT's commitment to ADSL," said Claire Rothman, telecoms analyst at SG Securities. "They have been cautious about rolling it out until now, because sometimes you can be too early with new technology."

The launch will be part of the investment programme announced yesterday, which will extend BT's networks in the UK and continental Europe, allowing the company to offer a range of new services at lower prices.

The network is based on Internet protocols, which divide voice and data traffic into small packages and fire them down

fibre-optic cable at high speed. The technology increases the amount of telecoms traffic BT can carry, while bringing down costs and allowing it to offer new services. This could stem the steady flow of large business customers to rival operators such as Colt and WorldCom.

"This is a major milestone in creating the foundation for electronic business on a pan-European scale," said Chris Earnshaw, BT's engineering and technology director.

The amount of data traffic in the UK is expected to grow by more than 150 per cent over the next five years, creating a market worth up to £10bn. The use of Internet protocols will eventually make it impossible to distinguish between voice and data traffic.

BT has just finished building its pan-European network, which stretches across 36,000 kilometres and links London and most of the major business centres in Europe. The network will be formally opened in Amsterdam next month.

Over the next five years, BT will expand the network in the UK to increase its reach. By the time it is complete, three-quarters of BT's existing business customers will be no more than 500 metres from a direct connection to fibre-optic cable.

Other operators such as MCI WorldCom, Cable & Wireless and KPN Qwest, a joint venture between Dutch and US telecoms operators, are at various stages of building pan-European networks based on Internet protocols.

Send a Valentine message to your loved one and you could WIN a weekend for two at Grayshott Hall



'In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love', wrote Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and once again this year The Independent will be publishing your romantic, mysterious, funny and just plain daft messages to your loved one (and of course you don't have to be young or a man to indulge). In time for Valentine's Day we will send on your behalf an anonymous card telling the recipient to look for his/her personal message in The Independent on Sunday.

The sender of the best and most original message published will win a fabulous weekend for two at Grayshott Hall Fitness Retreat in Surrey - the former country home of Tennyson - and the runner-up will WIN a midweek two-night stay for two.

So just compose your message, follow the instructions below - and then you can start dreaming of two days unwinding with your loved one in beautiful, relaxing surroundings, revitalising your bodies with rejuvenating hydrotherapy, swimming together in the heated indoor pool, getting back into trim in the gym, enjoying natural therapies...and, of course, delicious and healthy food!

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

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ADDRESS	ADDRESS
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YOUR DETAILS (in capitals)

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Write your message above in capital letters, and tick your option (all prices inclusive of VAT)

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8 words for £9.95 + extra words at £1.25 each ☐

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Post this coupon to: The Independent Valentine, Classified Dept, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL

or telephone 0171 293 2000 between 9.30 - 5.30pm Monday to Friday.

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Shakeout helps FSA recruit staff

THE CITY jobs shake-out has come to the aid of the Financial Services Authority (FSA), helping an end to a recruitment crisis that threatened to compromise the City watchdog's effectiveness in its first year.

Howard Davies, FSA chairman, said yesterday that with more people coming on to the jobs market, the gap that led the authority to underspend its budget by £10m last year was close to being closed. Average pay in the City rose by 5 per cent last year, he said.

"The difficult areas where

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

The high turnover caused by integrating the various regulators, the move to Canary Wharf and the difficulty in finding replacements has put unacceptable pressure on existing staff and delayed some projects.

The FSA claims to offer salaries competitive with comparable City firms, but it cannot match the large bonus elements of City packages.

The higher staff level means that the control total for the FSA budget next year will rise by 9 per cent to £188.5m, although that figure is just 1.9 per cent

higher than the £145m the FSA would have spent if it had had its full staff complement in 1998/99, a fall in real terms. Salaries are the biggest item in the FSA budget, accounting for £104.6m or 68 per cent.

Mr Davies said the costs associated with the move to Canary Wharf were £13m last year but savings in terms of lower support costs were already being made.

The banks have also gained a one-off saving of £30m as a result of the shift to the FSA's fee-based system.

SAO PAULO

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هكذا امن الاصل

Pub high-flyer crashes after profits warning

AS SPECULATION swirled of more takeover activity among pub companies, shares of one of the industry's high-flyers crashed following a shock profits warning.

The Old English Pub Co slumped 103.5p to 157.5p after parting company with its director Stuart Simpson and saying profits would be nearer £7m than the £8m the stock market expected.

The Gasco took the shine off the pub sector, which has been in a rare old ferment following the Enterprise Inns takeover approach to Inn Business and the Regent Inns/SPI merger talks.

Greenalls, the hotels and pubs chain which is thought to be experiencing pressure from City institutions, frothed up 12p to 342.5p. JD Wetherspoon, which has so far remained aloof from the corporate activity, rose 13.5p to 214p, and Lumina jumped 47.5p to 72.5p.

But once Old English rolled out its trading gloom towards the close, gains were pared back with Century Inns ending 10.5p lower at 113.5p. It seems Old English ex-

pected, been given a berth following the BTR merger with Siebe. Daily Mail ordinary shares celebrated with a 337.5p jump to 3,275p and the "A" shares 350p to 3,452p.

On their last day as separate entities, BTR added 4.75p to 133.75p and Siebe 10p to 250p. There are hopes that the new engineering combine, to be called BTR Siebe, will attract a raft of favourable circulars as analysts connected with the merger become free to issue their observations and profit estimates.

Imperial Chemical Industries, year's figures today, fell 26.5p to 518p. Depressed profits of £315m are expected, and although the dividend is safe the view in some quarters is that the group should consider cutting the payment.

Sage, the computer group, scored a 77.5p gain to 2,040p, a peak after raising £56.6m through a placing by BT Alex Brown. The investment house sold the shares at 1,910p. A US group is being acquired for £88m.

Carlton Communications firmed 25p to 631p as Lehman Brothers remained positive, and BP Amoco gained 10p to 885p on a Commerzbank upgrade.

Takeover speculation was still rife. The engineer Weir, attracting US interest, gained 9.5p to 304p, and the chemical materials maker Scape rose 14.5p to 124.5p in busy trading on talk that an aggressive strike was imminent. BICC, the cable and construction group, was back in the limelight with a 4p advance to 79p, and House of Fraser, the department store chain, hardened 5.5p to 92p in brisk trading as speculative activity returned.

Alexander Russell, a maker of concrete products, hardened 39.5p to 120p after admitting takeover talks were taking place. Sedgemoor, which distributes electronic components, gained 6p to 45p; it reported it had received "a number of preliminary proposals" from rivals. But it seems the deals on offer are not good enough to obtain the support of the Sedgemoor board.

Engineer Energy Technique fell 0.5p to 21.5p after a warning that it may go private because of the poor environment for small companies.

SEAG VOLUME: 1.1 billion
SEAG TRADES: 79,052
GILTS INDEX: 116.29-0.24

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

last Easter, are, despite a little hesitant headway, still uncomfortably near their year's lows.

First Leisure Corporation, where takeover talk is never far below the surface, rose 11.5p to 213.5p, and Northern Leisure 5p to 129p. Hard-pressed Rank was a shade firmer at 207.5p.

Manchester United, declared the world's richest football club, made a modest contribution, 1.5p up at 225.5p.

Sentiment was also helped by an upbeat Granada shareholders' meeting, which sent the shares surging 5p to 1,151.5p. It described trading as "very positive". However, the group denied market talk of a bid for Whitbread, up 11p to 908.5p. Chief executive Charles Allen said: "Whitbread is definitely not on our agenda."

Ladbroke, providing Rank's chief executive, led the Footsie leader board, centering 14.5p higher to 243p.

Mr Arnaut, who quit as a Diageo director - presumably to give him more flexibility over selling shares - is thought to have held talks about unloading at least part of the LVMH interest.

panded too quickly last year. Two sets of pubs and hotels it acquired were largely responsible for the setback, with costs spiralling. This is the second time a pub company has come a cropper. Last year Regent slumped from nearly 400p to around 150p after a surprise profits warning.

At around the same time Old English struggled to get a rights issue away; it raised £20.5m at 330p a share but underwriters took up more than half the issue.

The latest bottom-of-the-barrel pub performance could destroy a rally in leisure shares before it gets under way. The sector has endured a long, debilitating bear run. The sudden awareness of the neglected value lurking on the stock market undercard, plus the inevitable takeover whispers, helped the run-down sector score a 3.3 per cent gain on a day most shares were in retreat.

Hopes that the nation will avoid recession, despite more CBI gloom, and that consumer spending could pick up, were other influences behind the leisure revival. The prospect of another interest-rate cut also helped sentiment.

The sector has been devastated as doubts set in about continuing growth, and profit forecasts were pulled back. Many shares, riding at a peak

British Airways rose 16p to 374.5p as the fall in the important premium air traffic figures narrowed, and Reckitt & Colman added another 21.5p to 891.5p on the sudden departure of well compensated chief executive, Vernon Sankey, which is seen as improving prospects of a bid.

Daily Mail & General Trust, the newspaper publisher, becomes a Footsie constituent today. It has, as

expected, been given a berth following the BTR merger with Siebe. Daily Mail ordinary shares celebrated with a 337.5p jump to 3,275p and the "A" shares 350p to 3,452p.

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Reckitt at a turning point

IS IT NOW time to start re-appraising the investment attractions, or otherwise, of Reckitt & Colman?

The household products group, whose brands include Harpic and Dettol, parted company with its chief executive, Vernon Sankey, on Tuesday just three months after a disastrous profits warning. The shares shot up 50p on the news and rose another 16p to 888p yesterday as the market senses that this company could be at another turning point.

It is four years since Reckitt paid £1bn for the US group L&E the maker of Lysol disinfectant, and sold off other assets such as Colmans mustard. City experts now see one of two things happening: there could be a hardening of the existing strategy, but with a sharper and more responsive view on costs and market changes, or a predator could launch a bid.

Few expect a radical change of strategy, and the company indicated as much on Tuesday. It will remain focused on a core of key brands that are number one or two in their sectors, while expanding operations in

emerging markets, particularly in Asia and Latin America. It is a similar strategy to Unilever's, but the problem at Reckitt & Colman has been some bad luck and some mistakes in implementation.

It failed to address the cost base in Asia quickly enough following the economic crisis there, and it was slow to adapt to the shift among US retailers towards just-in-time relationships with suppliers; this meant it was hit harder than rivals by the subsequent destocking. Both were key reasons behind Reckitt's profits warning in November. Of course, trading has been tough.

Where now? Talk of a bid is inevitable as the company is vulnerable without a chief executive, and the shares are still well off their peak, even after the rise of the past two days. Possible predators include Unilever, Procter & Gamble and Colgate Palmolive. Speculators say Reckitt is too small to tough it out with muscular rivals such as these.

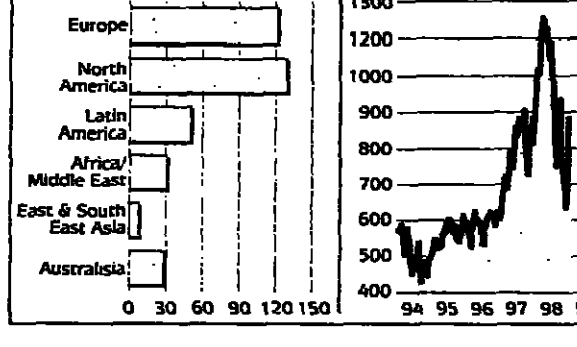
INVESTMENT

RECKITT & COLMAN: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £3.6bn, share price 891.5p (+20.5p)

Trading record	95	96	97	98	99
Turnover (£bn)	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.2
Pre-tax profits (£m)	160.2	417.8	334	302.5	277
Earnings per share (p)	22.4	80.8	57.7	53.1	48.5
Dividends per share (p)	19.6	21.2	23.4	24.0	26

Profit by region
Year to December 1997, £m



But this ignores two points. One is that, although size is not a prerequisite for success in these markets, Reckitt has top brands such as Dettol, Harpic, Mr Sheen and Wizard in household products. In over-the-

counter medicines it has Disprin and Lemsip. These are all top brands in their respective niches.

This might make the group an attractive morsel for a larger player, but this may not be the

They don't need to dive in now, they can afford to bide their time," one analyst said. According to some sector watchers, the Reckitt & Colman share price is now in no-man's-land. On fundamentals, it is probably overvalued, but it is trading at a discount to break-up valuations of £10-plus per share.

That could lead smaller investors to take one of two courses. Cautious souls could take advantage of the current spike in the price and sell. Bolder types might look at the multiple of 17 on expected profits of £27m and find the stock interesting. But even they should wait for further news on trading before diving in.

Gartland's view is a lot less rosy

NOT EVERYONE shares Eddie George's view that the threat of recession has receded. Tony Gartland is chairman of Gartland Whalley & Barker, the AIM-listed investment vehicle specialising in growing companies to the point where they can be floated or bought by venture capitalists. From where he sits at the sharp end of UK business, matters don't look that good.

GWB has three quoted investments. Cirqual, a manufacturer of industrial components, traded successfully but the shares have fallen 60 per cent from their high point last year and a possible takeover bid fell through. Aquarius, which makes goods for the home improvement market, has been rewarded for an outstanding trading performance last year with a 40 per cent drop in the share price. Quantic, a training and recruitment company floated in June, has gone steadily downhill ever since and is now worth less than

half its flotation price, although GWB booked a useful profit.

GWB itself made 11 acquisitions, floated one business and sold another during the year, and profits in the portfolio of quoted and unquoted companies almost doubled to £25.2m. Even allowing for a big drop in profits on disposals and a sharply higher interest charge, profits rose by 17 per cent to £24.2m in the year to the end of October. But the total return on assets, including changes in value of investments, showed a profit of only £8.6m and earnings of 8.42p, down from £21.2m and 21.43p the previous year.

Mr Gartland feels there are bargains to be picked up in current market conditions, but admits there is little scope for taking profits by floating companies in the portfolio. GWB shares closed down 12.5p at 94.5p, little more than half their value last July.

Tarmac demerger may add 33% to share value

THE DEMERGER of Tarmac's building materials and construction businesses is expected to boost the company's long-suffering share price, analysts said yesterday.

On some estimates, the split announced on Tuesday could add up to 33 per cent to Tarmac's share value as investors realise that two companies are worth more than one entity.

Industry experts believe the stock - one of the sector's great underperformers - could go even higher on the back of speculation of a takeover of the two companies. The building materials group would be the more attractive target, but even the low-margin construction group could interest some large contractors.

On a purely financial basis, Mike Betts, building analyst at JP Morgan, believes the split - to be completed in six months - values Tarmac at about 150p, compared to 113.25p yesterday. The building materials unit

will be by far the more valuable of the two. According to Mr Betts, putting 1999 operating profit estimates of £181m on a multiple of nine - in line with other materials companies - gives an enterprise value of between £1.5bn and £1.7bn. A similar exercise on the construction business, with profits set to be £38m and a lower mul-

tiple of seven, gives a value of about £260m. Take off debt of £300m and other minor items, and the value of the total group comes out at over £1.4bn. This translates to 150p per share, with about 120p accounted for by building materials and more than 20p by construction.

However, most experts agree that further upside could be provided by takeover action. David Taylor at Teather & Greenwood said: "The split will make a takeover of the building materials business more likely. The contracting arm has been essentially a poison pill."

The list of potential bidders is topped by Aggregate Industries. Others include France's Lafarge, the Irish group CRH and Australian giant Pioneer.

In the UK, RMC, Hanson and the cement makers Blue Circle and Rugby may be interested. The contracting arm could be taken out, with Amec and John Mowlem the most likely buyers.

promoted David Masters to be executive deputy chairman. He is currently managing director of Kerry Investment Management, a Hong Kong company. There are also two new non-executives: Baroness Wilcox, the former chairman of the National Consumer Council, and Tan Sri Dr Kay Peng Khoo, a Malaysian industrialist.

Alister Pauline, group managing director of ICC, points out that the 35,500 kilos of microfiche contain the information equivalent of more than a million kilos of paper, and equals the weight of approximately 40,000 City traders. The microfiche will be moved from London to ICC's Cardiff facility in August.

E-mail: j.willcock@independent.co.uk

ICI chief's trivial pursuit

BRENDAN O'NEILL has been confirmed as chief executive of ICI, having completed his probationary period since joining last May as chief operating officer. This is prompted by the retirement as chairman of Sir Ronald Hampel, who will be succeeded by Charles Miller Smith, the former chief executive.

Mr O'Neill insists his number one priority is "to press ahead with ICI's established strategy of turning itself into a specialty chemicals company". He has his work cut out: its current market cap is less than what ICI paid Unilever for its specialty chemicals side. The exact size of Mr O'Neill's task will be confirmed today when its results are announced.

Anyway, Mr O'Neill looks like the man for the job. A keen Guinness drinker - he really made his name heading Guinness Brewing from 1983 to 1998 - the native of St Helens is also

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

a Rugby League fanatic and obsessive about pop music trivia. "I would like to think, though, that that is not what got me the job," he adds.

Poor analysts

SALARIES in the Square Mile are more varied than you might think. While around a fifth of all analysts earn over £150,000 a year, another fifth have to struggle by on less than £50,000.

Tucked away in the latest Reuters Survey of European Larger Companies, I also learn that over half of analysts work between 61 and 80 hours a week, with about 5 per cent putting in over 80 hours.

Gavin Casey, chief executive of the London Stock Exchange, handed out prizes to the top-rated people yesterday at the Drapers' Hall in the City.

The contest for best individual fund manager was a draw between Robert Tann of Capital Group and Mark Ferguson of Schroder Investment Management. Fidelity Investment Management won best fund management group, while Merrill Lynch ran away with three titles: best broker sales team, best broker research and best broker execution.

Moving story

"MOVING OFFICE is nearly as bad as moving house," as far as Newton is concerned. The affable head of the City PR firm Newton & Co has thrown



in his lot with larger rivals Grandfield Newton, and moving his files over has been traumatic.

Mr Newton is perhaps best known as the mouthpiece for Arthur Andersen's insolvency experts. These used to include John Talbot, who wound up the private side of Robert Maxwell's empire. Now Mr Talbot is the envy of his former liquidation colleagues, having been made global head of corporate finance at the accountancy giant.

Mr Newton himself has some filial competition - his son Richard Newton left the Sunday Telegraph last autumn to help launch an innovative screensaver company.

Regal revamp

REGAL HOTELS, which owns 117 mid-market hotels in the UK, has rejigged its board to boost its expansion. It has brought in a new chairman, Professor Arthur KC Li, who is currently vice-chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The company has also

promoted David Masters to be executive deputy chairman. He is currently managing director of Kerry Investment Management, a Hong Kong company. There are also two new non-executives: Baroness Wilcox, the former chairman of the National Consumer Council, and Tan Sri Dr Kay Peng Khoo, a Malaysian industrialist.

Microfiche catch

BRITAIN'S LARGEST online business information provider, ICC Information, has bought the microfiche library owned by Companies House in City Road, London.

Alister Pauline, group managing director of ICC, points out that the 35,500 kilos of microfiche contain the information equivalent of more than a million kilos of paper, and equals the weight of approximately 40,000 City traders. The microfiche will be moved from London to ICC's Cardiff facility in August.

E-mail: j.willcock@independent.co.uk

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES				
Currency	Sterling Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months
US\$	1.0000	2.5499	2.5477	2.5477
Yen	155.88	155.88	155.88	155.88
DM	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363
Swiss	1.4833	1.4833	1.4833	1.4833
French	6.5596	6.5596	6.5596	6.5596
Italian	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363	1.9363
Spanish	166.37	166.37	166.37	166.37
Japanese	155.88	155.88	155.88	155.88
Chinese	8.2756	8.2756	8.2756	8.2756
Indian	47.8480	47.8480	47.8480	47.8480
South African	6.5596	6.5596	6.5596	6.5596
Argentine	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Colombian	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Costa Rican	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Czech	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Danish	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Deutsche	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Dutch	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
European	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
French	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
German	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Greek	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Irish	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Italian	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Japanese	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Korean	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Malaysian	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Mexican	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Norwegian	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Portuguese	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Russian	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Spanish	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Swedish	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Swiss	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Taiwanese	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Thai	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
UK	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
US	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Yen	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Yugoslavian	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000

INTEREST RATES				
Currency	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
US\$	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
Yen	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%
DM	5.25%	5.25%	5.25%	5.2

SPORT

Five Nations countdown: England are marginal favourites but their unpopularity in Celtic lands will hinder them

Red rose looks ready to bloom

BY CHRIS HEWETT

IT WAS a close run thing, thanks to the accused double gin brigade in their club ties and blazers, but the usual suspects are safely under starter's orders for one last pre-millennial gallop around the Five Nations circuit before Italy throw their hat in the ring to launch a new tournament for a new century.

England go into this season's jamboree as marginal favourites, purely because they play the French at home rather than in Paris, but the prudent politics of the last few weeks have done them no favours; given that they are now about as popular among the Celts as Bernard Manning would have been at Greenham Common, the red roses will not survive the next couple of huddling months without losing a petal or two.

When Jim Telfer, the Scotland coach, described this 78th and final Five Nations as "a more open contest than in recent years, when it has been something of a two-horse race", he hit the nail squarely on the head. Rather too squarely for comfort, perhaps. This one could just develop into a four-horse race: that is to say, a breathless tussle for European supremacy involving everyone except the Scots, whose shirts should carry the words "rank outsider" rather than a sponsor's logo. Maybe there is a company called Rank Outsider with some marketing money going

FIVE NATIONS
FIXTURES

6 FEBRUARY

Ireland v FranceDublin
Scotland v WalesMurrayfield

20 FEBRUARY

England v Scotland.....Twickenham
Wales v IrelandWembley

6 MARCH

Ireland v EnglandDublin
France v WalesParis

20 MARCH

England v FranceTwickenham
Scotland v IrelandMurrayfield

10 APRIL

France v ScotlandParis

11 APRIL

Wales v EnglandWembley

spare. If so, its managing director should contact Murrayfield for a marriage made in heaven.

Had Telfer been able to pick and mix from a full squad in advance of this weekend's opening skirmish with a confident Welsh outfit in Edinburgh, the chances of a first five-way split since 1973 – and only the second in the history of the tournament – might have been less infinitesimal.

Frustratingly, he has been denied that privilege. Shorn of his bulkiest prop, his hardest flanker and his most exciting new threequarter, Old Granite Features once again finds himself up the Tweed without a claymore for a paddle. The Scots are 50-1 for this year's title. Defeat on Saturday, a distinct possibility, will attach a second unwanted zero to those odds.

By contrast, the remaining quartet appear bright-eyed, bushy-tailed and bristling with aggressive intent. None more so, indeed, than the Irish, who are racing towards this weekend's frenzied tilt at the Grand Slammers of France in the red-handed slipstream of Ulster, the new European champions.

There is not much wrong with a pack capable of replacing Malcolm O'Kelly, the form lock of 1999, with Jeremy Davidson, the form lock of 1997; in Keith Wood, Paul Wallace, Andy Ward and a rejuvenated Eric



France keep possession to thrash hapless Wales en route to the Grand Slam in 1998. This year's Five Nations' Championship is expected to be a comparatively close contest

Peter Jay

Miller they possess four other forwards perfectly capable of mixing it with the best and living to give full rein to the blarney.

You might paint a similarly optimistic picture for the Welsh, Graham Henry, arrived to change the world before Christmas rather than during it. The New Zealander is as sharp as the studs on an Auckland-

der's boots and as shrewd as you like, he takes no long-odds liberties with his selection, he tells his charges precisely what to do in every imaginable situation and, most importantly of all, he makes them believe. Before Henry, the Red Dragon was a walking inferiority complex that spent rather more time on the psychiatrist's couch than on the training paddock. Six months on, it has got itself a life.

For all that, the red and green Celtic renaissance remains fragile. A single rough afternoon against either of the tournament grown-ups could send rugby's arch-romantics straight back to the padded cell with their phobias running riot. And it could very easily happen, even though the Irish have both France and England on their own mudheap and Wales feel increasingly comfortable in their

home from home at Wembley. The former have a pack, but no three-quarter line worthy of celebration; the latter can boast a lethal back division, but no tight five to load the bullets. One close shave against the Springboks and victory in a devalued European Cup do not add up to a spring, let alone a summer.

Heaven knows, it is high time the Five Nations regained the initiative

from the Two Nations. England have won eight on the trot against Scotland, nine of the last 11 against Ireland and eight of the last 10 against Wales, while the French have won 24 of their last 30 championship games against the twilit Celts. Such predictability leaves even this wonderfully social, feel-good tournament teetering on the brink of unsustainability; the Scots, unable to pull in a quorum for the reigning world

champions last November, would not fill Murrayfield this weekend either; were it not for the traditional ale-propelled migration from the valleys of Wales. How strange that the loudest voices on an organising committee that temporarily decided it could do without England should come from the weakest link in the Five Nations chain.

In short, the northern hemisphere game badly needs the Celts to start playing their rugby with the same degree of enthusiasm they bring to their politics. The World Cup, just eight hectic months away, will be a major yawn if the big five – South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, France and England – put 50 points plus on everyone else. To succeed in an increasingly congested sporting landscape requires contenders and crowds. What it does not remotely require is a half-empty Murrayfield or a third-full Lansdowne Road. That, sadly, is what it will get if the Scots and Irish, in particular, do not front up on the field.

And there is no better time than now to begin the fronting-up process: wall-to-wall television (even allowing for the satellite blight on the big Twickenham occasions) and £1m of Lloyds-TSB money should set the underdogs tearing away from the traps. The rugby world has always tuned in mass to the Five Nations, but those in the real world south of the equator have spent the last few years viewing it as a comedy rather than a drama. It is down to the Celts to stop the laughter.

TEAM-BY-TEAM GUIDE TO THE FIVE NATIONS

ENGLAND

Clive Woodward has a pack – by God, he has a pack – but Will Greenwood's likely absence from the crucial inside centre slot is the equivalent of a poke in the eye with a pitchfork, especially as Phil de Glanville is also laid up with injury. The coach has a delicate decision to make in perming two from Mike Catt, Paul Grayson and Jonny Wilkinson, the three surviving contenders for what the New Zealanders call the "five-eighths" positions. Elsewhere, though, Woodward is in cover. Martin Johnson is on the warpath in the second row, Richard Hill is playing quite beautifully on the flank and Kyran Bracken is underlining his status as a scrum-half of the highest quality. England also have a relatively gentle introduction to the tournament – the Scots at Twickenham – before the serious stuff starts in Dublin.

Prospects: Good enough, just, to take a new-look French side on home soil. The likely champions.

FRANCE

The Tricolores are a little red-faced just at the moment, what with their defeat by Australia before Christmas and the repeated embarrassments inflicted on their state-of-the-art club sides by Ulster. Still, Jean-Claude Sirels likes to look forward rather than back, aware that some of last season's Grand Slam contributors might not make it to the World Cup, he pulled a new threequarter line out of thin air and used it to kick a few Italian back-sides in Genoa at the weekend. Emile Ntamack's return to optimum form is not great news for the home nations and, although they did not show it at Stradey Park or Ravenhill during the European Cup, the Stade Français strike axis of Gomes, Dourthe and Corbia is not the worst. Up front, they are only too recognisable: Calvano, Tournaire, the Lievreumont brothers, Magné... help.

Prospects: Doggy goal-kicking may cost them a third Slam. Runners-up to England.

IRELAND

Can the island live up to the province? Almost certainly not; unlike the European Cup, which Ulster seized in such bracing fashion last Saturday, the Five Nations is not subject to an English boycott. For all the feistiness bubbling away in their pack and the home advantage they hold over the two tournament favourites, the Irish are thinking more in terms of victory over their fellow Celts. "We've set ourselves a goal of third place," says Warren Gatland, their coach. Kidology? No, just a realistic appraisal of Ireland's current status in life. They will be the hardest, most physical and comfortably the most spirited team in the championship but, Con O'Shea aside, they are short of class out wide. A deluge of up-and-unders might occasionally do for a Toulouse or a Colonniers, but it does not cut much ice at international level.

Prospects: Fourth, which would be more satisfying than last year but not quite satisfying enough.

SCOTLAND

It never rains, but it lashes down with a vengeance. Scotland's domestic game has been cut to ribbons, its administration is riven with mistrust, the national side has lost three of its most influential players to injury and this season's away games are in London and Paris. Thanks very much. Back in November, after the Scots had given the Springboks a hurry-up in the first half of the test at Murrayfield, Jim Telfer was in danger of smiling for the first time since the end of the 1997 Lions tour. Umpire injuries down the road, the coach is in misery-guts mode once more. Scott Murray and Doddie Weir may earn themselves some brownie points in the second row and, if Tom Smith's body stops playing him up for a second, they will be able to boast the championship's most awkward scrummers. And that, sadly, is about it.

Prospects: Murrayfield used to be a stirring venue. The only stirring it will do this season is with a wooden spoon.

WALES

Vernon Pugh, Glamour Griffiths and the Welsh Rugby Union will not want to hear this, but the joint rebellion by Cardiff and Swansea has done Graham Henry and his national side an immense favour. Exposed week in, week out to club rugby of genuine quality, the referees' players – Jon Humphreys, Darren Morris, Colin Charvis, Mark Taylor, Scott Gibbs – have at last discovered the virtue of consistency. They are playing out there at cloud level and, all things being equal, they should be in a position to ask serious questions of the best. Sadly, things have recently become unequal. The loss of Craig Quinell and Gareth Thomas to injury deprives Henry of two of his biggest hitters and he will find the first hole, in particular, wickedly difficult to fill. A good loose combination and a nifty back division, yes. But up at the sharp end? Um...

Prospects: Likely to prove the best of the Celts, but just as likely to go down big time in Paris. Third.

Ntamack assumes the Blanco role Signposts to greater glory

EMILE NTAMACK has been labouring under the weight of the "new Serge Blanco" tag ever since he made his international debut against Wales five years ago.

When he emerges into the Lansdowne Road bearpit to face Ireland in this Saturday's opening match of the Five Nations' Championship, the most elegant attacking runner in French rugby will finally fulfil the expectations of his countrymen by donning the No 15 shirt once graced by the favourite son of Biarritz.

Ntamack's move from wing to full-back mirrors Blanco's positional shift of the early 1980s and Jean-Claude Sirels, the national coach, believes it will be the making of his new-look back division. Two three-quarters, Franck Comba and Thomas Lombard, are new to Five Nations' rugby – they replace Stéphane Glas and Christophe Dominici, who performed so brilliantly

BY CHRIS HEWETT

in last season's Grand Slam campaign – and their inexperience swung the vote towards Ntamack.

Arthur Gomes, the versatile Stade Français regular who performed perfectly adequately at full-back in recent Tests, would have won a reprieve had Ntamack not recovered so quickly from the knee injury he suffered during last weekend's victory over Italy in Genoa. As it is, Gomes finds himself beaten on two fronts: firstly by Ntamack and also by Philippe Bernat-Salles, who retains his place on the right wing.

Up front, the French remain loyal to the same pack that gave the forwards of the home unions what might accurately be described as a jolly good seeing-to during last year's competition. Christian Calvano, injured for the first half of the season after undergoing surgery last sum-

mer, reclaims the loose-head position from Sylvain Marconnet and resumes his front-row partnership with Franck Tournaire and the captain, Raphael Ibanez. In the back row, the Lievreumont brothers, Marc and Thomas, hold off the challenge of Philippe Benetton and play at blind-side flank and No 8 respectively.

"We wanted to strike a balance between speed and power," Jo Maso, the team manager, pronounced. "We intend to expand and vary our game, but we know that the Irish will present a formidable challenge." To that end, Maso and his colleagues have packed their bench with a rough, tough breed of players: Benetton, Marc Dal Maso and Thierry Cleda are not exactly soft touches.

As expected, Thomas Castaignède is back after a few months alongside Calvano on the casualty slab. The extravagantly gifted outside-half from Castres was de-

tating last season, but a shoulder rebuild left his appearance in this tournament in the lap of the gods. Fortunately for the Tricolores, he came through a 50-minute gallop in Genoa with both his new shoulder and his old bag of tricks intact.

Scotland, who play Wales at Murrayfield on Saturday, are anything but intact. The withdrawal of their captain, Bryan Redpath, with an ankle injury suffered while playing for Edinburgh Reivers, was only the latest in a long line of setbacks for Jim Telfer, the coach, who now intends to name a starting XV this afternoon. Jamie Mayer, Matthew Proudfoot and Gordon Simpson, all certainties, will also be missing owing to a variety of physical conditions.

FRANCE TEAM (vs Ireland, Lansdowne Road, Dublin, Saturday): E Ntamack; P Bernat-Salles, C Calvano, F Comba, T Lombard; C Castaignède, P Charvis, D Morris, T Lievreumont, M Lievreumont, F Pelous, O Broziet, F Tournaire, R Ibanez (capt), C Calvano, R Ibanez, S Gomes, A Gomes, D Dourthe, P Benetton, T Cleda, S Marconnet, M Dal Maso.

WHEN IT comes to World Cup indicators, the Five Nations' Championship is hardly the stuff of a bookmaker's dreams; after all, none of the sides most likely to lift the Webb Ellis Trophy in Cardiff on 6 November are involved in the tournament. Nevertheless, recent history proves that a decent run in rugby's oldest and most outrageously hyped competition can act as a launchpad of sorts.

In 1987, when the inaugural World Cup was fought out in the jet-lag territories of Australia and New Zealand, France unexpectedly beat the Wallabies to a place in the final off the back of a first Grand Slam in six years. Daniel Dubroca's side did not rip through Europe with anything like the panache shown by the 1998 Tricolores under Raphael Ibanez, another booker from the deep-south heartland of French rugby; indeed, their seven-point victory over the Welsh in Paris was the

A decent Five Nations campaign can forge World Cup contenders. By Chris Hewett

most handsome of their winning margins. But the experience served to weld together their notoriously disparate parts, for 13 of the team who won at Twickenham featured in the Eden Park climax with the All Blacks four months later.

England experienced something very similar in 1991. Having sewn up their first Slam in more than a decade by out-muscling the French on an extraordinary day at Twickenham, they promptly rode the Yellow Brick Road all the way to a World Cup final against the Australians that same autumn.

Once more, the bulk of the work was performed by the same players: 12 of those who saw off Serge Blanco and company in front of a delirious band of middle-Englanders in

March would go on to do battle with the Wallabies in November.

There was another England Grand Slam before the last World Cup in South Africa four years ago, although a big bloke by the name of Lomu ensured they would not reach the final in Johannesburg. Lawrence Dallaglio's men fulfil the bookies' expectations and do the business in this season's tournament, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that Lomu will devastate them once again when New Zealand visit Twickenham in a pool match of supreme importance in the second week in October.

But that collision is still eight months distant. The Calcutta Cup match with Scotland is only 16 days away.

Danoli returns to linger in limelight

TWO YEARS ago, the chance to see Danoli run at a racecourse in Ireland would put thousands on to the attendance. Back in 1994, he put a hundred times as much into punters' pockets when he won the Sun Alliance Novices' Hurdle. He opened fates and received bagfuls of fan mail, like Desert Orchid and Red Rum rolled into a single, brave little Irish package, until the leg injury which almost killed him seemed to stop the bandwagon in its tracks.

This Sunday, though, it could receive a burly push in the general direction of Cheltenham. Danoli will join the field for the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Leopardstown, his first race since October, and a repeat of his victory in the same event two years ago would reduce the entire grandstand to tears. Even a gallant third place would be enough to send him to the Gold Cup on a wave of cash and optimism.

But like all the best heroes, Danoli has a flaw. The leg problem which has troubled him for four months is still causing concern, but at 11 years of age, this year's Gold Cup will prob-

BY GREG WOOD

ably be his last. If it is to remain a serious target, a run on Sunday is essential.

"We didn't intend running him for a good bit [after his seasonal debut] and the Hennessy was always the race we were planning for," Tom Foley, Danoli's trainer, said yesterday.

"We expected to run in the Ericsson Chase at Christmas, only he got a sprain on his hind fetlock and that put us back a long, long way. We've had to try and keep him working away even though it wasn't right, and take everything day to day."

The favourite for Sunday's race is Florida Pearl, who has been the natural heir to Danoli in Irish racing's affections. He seems sure to start at odds-on, despite having fallen at the same course over Christmas, but many of those who take a short price about him will prob-

ably have a small saver on Danoli too, just in case.

Foley, though, offers little encouragement, for the Hennessy at least. "I think that Florida Pearl could win on Sunday without even coming off the horse, that's what I'd be expecting of him, anyhow. There's none of the Irish horses can touch him, and we're not expecting to be in the running at all."

"We're hoping that he runs a nice race and comes back sound, and if he does, at least we have five weeks left to prepare him for Cheltenham, and I'd be reckoning that we could put in a good run there."

But it is impossible to know how a return to competition might fire a natural performer like Danoli. "I think he knows that there's something going on," Foley says. "The television cameras were down today, and we took him to Leopardstown on Ladbroke Hurdle day to give him a little run-around, so he knows that he's getting back to racing."

"An awful lot of people enquire about him wherever I go, but the thing is that he's been so long without running that people are starting to say he'll never come back. But if he comes back and puts in a decent run, I'll be back to the same as ever."

"Florida Pearl takes the pressure off us, but I'd love to have it all back."

If Danoli makes it as far as Cheltenham, he will be the first horse on many minds. Cool Dawn, by contrast, will probably start among the outsiders, despite having actually won the Gold Cup last year. His form this season has been disappointing, but he is now recovering from treatment for crushed vertebrae in his back, sustained when he tumbled over in the parade ring at Wincanton before his seasonal debut.

"It wasn't serious but it was painful when he jumped," Robert Alner, his trainer, said yesterday. "It has settled down now and he is back in full work. He is being trained for the Gold Cup, and all being well he'll go straight to Cheltenham. We are not stressing him too much, and we are hoping for fast ground again."

Mouse Morris will today confirm either Tony McCoy or Paul Carberry as Boss Doyle's rider in Sunday's Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup. McCoy is favourite to take the ride on the seven-year-old.



Danoli has the support of his loyal trainer Tom Foley (centre) and stable-lad Jim Treacy

Dan Abraham

Obstruction to Route plan

DIRECT ROUTE could be forced to miss a run in the Mitsubishi Shogun Ascot Chase on 20 February because of the lack of a suitable jockey. If the Cheltenham Gold Cup leading fancy Tyeon Mill has his Festival warm-up in the two-and-a-half-mile Grade One race—as seems likely—he will be ridden by Norman Williamson. That would leave Johnson with the task of replacing the Irishman on Direct Route, whom he partnered to success in the Tingle Creek Chase at Sandown in December.

Johnson has Tony McCoy and Paul Carberry in mind for Direct Route, who is the market leader for the Champion Chase at Cheltenham. However, Tony Dobbin, severely criticised for his tactics on the eight-year-old when second in the Castleford Chase at Wetherby over Christmas, is out of the running.

McCoy could be claimed for one of Martin Pipe's entries in the race, leaving Johnson with a problem.

"Direct Route is a horse who has to have a pipe-opener, so I definitely want to get him down for the Mitsubishi race. But I wouldn't run him if I couldn't get Tony or Paul, it is as simple as that."

Johnson has gone 49 days without a win and said: "I can't seem to do anything right at the minute. I had a disastrous day at Musselburgh yesterday [Tuesday]. My horses are running well without winning. I have had about 20 seconds and thirds."

Another trainer who suffered a reversal yesterday was Venetia Williams, who sent out the hot favourites Jack Tanner and Silk Vestment to defeat at Newton Abbot.

Jack Tanner, a top-class novice hurdler two years ago but off the course since, was sent off 1-6 favourite for the novices' chase and had the as-

stance of McCoy. However, the 10-year-old was very weary up the home straight as Fighting Times and Vinces Slattery went on to register a six-length win over Fleetwing Mandate.

Silk Vestments started at 4-6 for the novices' hurdle but could only manage a one-paced third, 14 lengths behind Mr Perfecta.

Richard Edmondson

Nap: Cheerful Aspect (Towcester 3.10)
NB: Grooving (Kelso 4.00)

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TOWCESTER

1.40 Winters Keep 3.40 African Sun
2.10 Wandering Light (nb) 4.10 Beyond Our Reach
3.10 Bassano 4.10 Lirlyan

GOING: Cheerful - Soft Hurdles - Good to Soft (Heavy patches).
■ Right-hand, undulating. Run-in of 100 yds.
■ Course is an AS SE of town. Bus service from Northampton station. ADMISSION: Members £3; Terraces £2 (APR 50p); Course £5; CAR PARK Free.
FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS
■ LEADING TRAINERS: M. J. H. Jones 10-33 (24.5%), M. J. H. Jones 10-33 (24.5%), M. J. H. Jones 10-33 (24.5%).
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: A. Maguire 10-33 (24.5%), N. Williamson 10-33 (24.5%), N. Williamson 10-33 (24.5%).
■ FAVOURITES: 10-33 (24.5%).
BLINKERED FIRST TIME.

1.40 WINNING FORMULA FOR WEDDINGS SELLING H'CAP HURDLE (C) £2,000 added 2m 5f Penalty Value £7,884
1. 5-208 CLAREMONT (7) (M. J. H. Jones) C 10-33 (24.5%) M. J. H. Jones
2. 5-209 AMELIA PARK (12) (M. J. H. Jones) C 10-33 (24.5%) M. J. H. Jones
3. 5-210 CLAREMONT (7) (M. J. H. Jones) C 10-33 (24.5%) M. J. H. Jones
4. 5-211 CLAREMONT (7) (M. J. H. Jones) C 10-33 (24.5%) M. J. H. Jones
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THE INDEPENDENT
Thursday 4 February 1999 ***

Samaranch encircled by dissenters

THE BELEAGUERED International Olympic Committee president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, faced serious challenges both from outside and within the organisation yesterday.

European sports ministers at the World Conference on Doping in Sport objected to the composition of the IOC's proposed independent drug-testing agency and requested urgent consultations, to which the IOC agreed.

Earlier in the day, Samaranch had to deal with an internal revolt as a group of 50 IOC members forced him to rethink proposals for reforming the process of selecting cities to host the Games.

The establishment of the \$25m (£16m) drug-testing agency is one of the main proposals of a conference at which the IOC had hoped to restore its public image following the recent scandals over bribery and corruption. The IOC vice president, Dick Pound, said that the agency would be directed by a 15-strong group comprising members of the IOC, national Olympic committees and representatives from sponsors and the pharmaceutical industry.

However, the suggestion was immediately criticised by Britain's Minister for Sport, Tony Banks, who spoke on behalf of all the European sports ministers. "It is our unanimous opinion that we cannot at present accept the composition of the agency," he said, adding that its composition and functions "be the subject of urgent consultation with the European Union and other interested bodies." Banks hinted that funding of the body would be affected by the outcome of such discussions, and defended the rights of ministers to speak out on IOC matters. "When we have criticised we have criticised as friends of the IOC, because real friends tell you the truth," he said.

DRUGS IN SPORT

By MIKE ROWBOTTOM
in Lausanne

Pound later admitted that the ministers had been unhappy with representation from sponsors and the drug industry. The vice president, seen as a likely successor to Samaranch, went on to cast doubt on whether the IOC president would chair the agency body.

"Even the chairmanship of the council is now to be discussed. We have no set view on this."

The protest meeting of IOC members took place at 7am in the Palace Hotel, where strong views were expressed over the proposal to remove their voting right over which cities should hold the Games.

In the wake of the corruption scandal surrounding Salt Lake City's successful bid for the 2002 Winter Olympics, the IOC executive board proposed last month that the host of the 2006 event should be decided by a 15-strong commission, including just eight of the 106 IOC members. But that proposal has to be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the IOC membership at their extraordinary session next month, and yesterday's

breakfast gathering, which included Britain's IOC representative, Craig Reddie, presented a clear warning to the IOC president that the change would not be accepted.

The executive board will meet today to consider the rank-and-file members' counter-proposal that they should retain the right to choose between the top two rival cities after the 15-strong commission had whittled down the six bidders for the 2006 Games.

"Stripping us of our right to vote is creating the impression that we cannot be trusted," said one member, who asked not to be identified. "Some bad apples do not make the whole barrel rotten." There were further complications yesterday for the IOC leadership, as their hopes of standardising the penalty for serious doping offences to a two-year ban throughout the range of Olympic sports was resisted by cycling and football.

Sebastian Coe, Britain's double Olympic champion, delivered a rebuff to the US delegates who had stressed the need for a stringent, independent IOC doping controls on the opening day of the conference.

Referring to recent doping cases in the US, including the exoneration of sprinter Dennis Mitchell on the grounds that his apparently illegal levels of testosterone were a result of drinking beer and having sex, Coe said: "Some of the cases we have seen recently have stretched credibility to breaking point. We welcome contributions from all parties to this debate, but you can contribute better if you know that what is going on in your own backyard is beyond reproach."

Asked by American journalists if he regarded the judgement on Mitchell as comical, he responded: "Well, it's not a touchstone of grace and elegance, is it?"



Coe, criticised at the recent US doping cases

HGH test 'ready by 2000'

A BREAKTHROUGH on testing for human growth hormone - the thinking athlete's steroid - in time for the Sydney Olympics now looks likely, according to the research project jointly funded by the International Olympic Committee and the European Union, writes Mike Rowbottom.

Professor Peter Sonksen, of St Thomas's Hospital, received what he described as a "very positive" reaction to his final report from the IOC medical commission at a meeting that went on late into Tuesday night.

"We have a test now that will pick up a high proportion of cases where human growth hormone has been artificially administered," Sonksen said. "If decisions are taken swiftly,

the test can be in place for the Games of 2000."

The test is dependent upon the taking of blood samples from competitors, but Sonksen is confident that there are no major obstacles to the installation of a technique that was introduced at the 1994 Winter Olympics.

The five-year project, named GH2000, has involved taking blood samples from close to 1000 athletes, the last batch coming from the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in September of last year.

Illegal use of human growth hormone is believed to be a major factor in doping abuse worldwide. The discovery of supplies within the Chinese swimming team's possessions

at the last World Championships provided one of the highest profile pieces of evidence, but Sonksen said a picture of systematic abuse was evident from the large-scale theft of the substance.

"Horrendous amounts of HGH go missing," he said. "Trucks carrying pharmaceuticals are hijacked, and only the human growth hormone is taken." The IOC medical commission is now setting up a working committee to implement the research.

Sonksen believes the jointly funded international project could be a model for future research into another undetectable substance, erythropoietin (EPO), which almost brought the Tour de France cycle race to a halt last summer.



Yorkshire's Cheryl Beaumont (bottom) moves a step closer to the British National Squash Championships as she defeats Scotland's Helen Macfie in a qualifying match in Didsbury yesterday

Britons feel the heat in Malaysia

GOLF

By MARK GARROD
in Kuala Lumpur

LEE WESTWOOD and Darren Clarke start as the favourites going into the Benson and Hedges Malaysian Open, which starts today. With a first prize of £75,000, the tournament is the first joint venture between the European Tour and Asian PGA and has been billed as "East meets West."

Humidity remains a worry for the westerners, but Westwood is accustomed to the food and conditions, having won the title in 1997 and being denied last year only in a play-off by the Rochdale-born Las Vegas Ed Foyt.

"I suffered when I first played in Asia five years ago," Westwood said yesterday. "I got food poisoning on the plane over and needed an injection. It didn't help playing with a temperature. Anybody who has not had experience of these conditions is going to struggle really."

"Your concentration can wander at the best of times when it's not hot. But if you get flustered and hit some bad shots in this humidity it's hard to get your concentration back. It's probably the first thing that goes."

Westwood starts his season at a best-ever sixth in the world - two places higher than when he last played two months ago. He said he is not intimidated by his own success. "I don't bother with all the expectations on me. I have my goals and if I reach them I'm happy, and if I don't then I'm disappointed," he said.

Clarke, who by winning the season-ending Volvo Masters forced his way between Colin Montgomerie and Westwood at the top of the Order of Merit, has shed a stone in the past month and has not smoked since last November. "I've been working out six days a week," he said. "It was very enjoyable putting the weight on, not so enjoyable taking it off." said the 30-year-old Ulsterman.

"Hopefully I will feel the benefits - I have during the practice rounds here. I need to get another one and a half stones off, but the difference already is that I'm not as lethargic as I was. My immediate goal is the world's top 10 (he is currently 16th). To do that I've got to win more and bigger tournaments."

Broncos back in hunt for forwards

RUGBY LEAGUE

By DAVE HADFIELD

THE LONDON BRONCOS are scouring Australia for a player to reinforce their pack after learning that another of their forwards will miss the start of the Super League season.

Shane Millard, the second row who impressed after arriving last season, needs an operation on a hernia and will be out for six weeks.

London have already sent home Marley McKenzie, a prop from Adelaide, who has not played a game because of a

back injury. Their new coach, Dan Stains, hoped to enlist Adam Starr, a front-rower he worked with at Balmain, but he does not have a visa. "We will be phoning around clubs in Australia to find someone suitable," the Broncos' chief executive, Tony Rea, said. "It is particularly important that we are strong in the front row."

Rules, because the organisation is disillusioned with what it sees as a lack of support.

A try set up by a typical run from Jason Robinson and scored by Kris Radlinski gave Wigan an 18-16 win at Halifax in both sides' last pre-season games before the Challenge Cup. Wigan's new Australian signings, Greg Florimo and Brett Goldspink, both made debut, while Halifax's South African, Jamie Bloom, scored two early tries.

TODAY'S NUMBER

33
The age of the Bath centre, Jeremy Guscott, the oldest player in the England training squad named yesterday for rugby union's Five Nations' Championship

LINGFIELD

HYPERION

1.50 Fancied Times 2.20 Comeoutoffhog 2.50 Kentucky Bullet 3.20 Flying Officer 3.50 Kings Arrow 4.20 Loughlanes

GOING: Standard

STALLS: Inside except 5f & 1m - outside

DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low best up to 7m, especially for 6f

Equitack surface, left-hand, sharp undulating course.

Course is SE of town on B2028, Lingfield station (served by London, Victoria) adjoins course. ADMISSION: One enclosure £10. CAR PARK: Club £2; remainder free.

FIVE-YEAR STATISTICS

LEADING TRAINERS: G. L. Moore 55-554 (22.1%), R. Hemmion 48-373 (23.1%), M. Johnston 45-222 (17.6%), G. Kellogg 44-329 (24.2%)

LEADING JOCKEYS: A. Clark 75-601 (22.9%), J. Wimmer 55-307 (22.1%), S. Sanders 65-583 (15.5%), S. Whitworth 55-380 (14.2%)

FAVOURITES: 722-243 (53.7%)

LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Sunset Harbour (150) and Kentucky Bullet (250) have been sent 70 miles.

BLINKERED FIRST TIMES: Justification (second, 220), Family Tree (420).

1.50 HONEYBUCKLE HANDICAP (CLASS F) £2,750 added 5f

- 1.50-21 HALF YONE (15) (C) R. M. Power 7 10.0... D. O'Hall 5 B
- 2.00-21 MIDSUMMER NIGHT (16) J. Wimmer 4 9 11... J. McElroy 7 B
- 2.50-21 SQUIRE CORRIE (16) (C) D. J. Chapman 7 9 11... A. Callaghan 7 B
- 3.00-21 MISS BANANAS (16) (C) C. Waller 4 9 11... J. Callaghan 6 B
- 3.50-21 CAMEO (18) M. Channon 4 9 7... P. Clancy 7 1
- 4.00-21 DANIE TIMES (5) (C) J. Harty 4 9 5... J. Pollard 2 B
- 4.50-21 SUNSET HARBOUR (15) (C) S. Kesteven 8 9 2... J. Fitzpatrick 5 B
- 5.00-21 TANGLED (13) (C) J. Callaghan 4 9 11... J. Callaghan 6 B
- 5.50-21 NISE N SHINE (12) (C) C. O'Farrell 5 9 11... J. Fitzpatrick 5 B
- 6.00-21 KALAH (12) (C) D. Chapman 10 8 0... J. Fitzpatrick 5 B

BETTING: 5-2 Half Yone, 5-1 Sunset Harbour, 5-1 Danie Times, 5-1 Squire Corrie, 7-1 Cameo, 12-1 Tangled Times, 14-1 Miss Bananas, 15-1 Nise N Shine, 20-1 Kalah

FORM GUIDE

Today's lower draw may not suit the strong-fighting Half Yone so well as the wide berth he won last time and he may struggle to beat the third, DANIE TIMES, the star. Non-hor's long-running 4yo has a good chance of getting the race and may be able to repel all challenges.

2.20 WISTERIA CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F) £2,750 added 7f

- 1.00-31 SPEEDY CLASSIC (21) (C) M. Heaton-Ellis 10 5... A. Clark 8
- 2.00-31 COMEOUTOFFHOG (21) (C) A. McKenna 4 8 1... P. Don 8 B
- 3.00-31 FREDERICK (9) (C) M. G. Kellogg 5 9 1... P. Frederick 7 10
- 4.00-31 ALANEM (18) (C) D. J. Harty 6 8 8... J. Callaghan 6 B
- 5.00-31 JIVORS DEED (7) (C) P. Moore 6 8 8... J. P. Spencer 2 7
- 6.00-31 HAWAII STORM (14) (C) D. J. Harty 11 8 8... J. P. Spencer 2 7
- 7.00-31 DARK MENACE (17) (C) J. P. Moore 7 8 7... J. P. Spencer 2 7
- 8.00-31 PRIVATE SEAL (12) J. P. Moore 4 8 7... J. P. Spencer 2 7
- 9.00-31 JUSTINIANUS (9) (C) J. P. Moore 7 8 5... G. Bardsley 14 V
- 10.00-31 KANAWA (7) A. P. Jones 5 8 0... F. Norton 4
- 11.00-31 SILENT PRIDE (14) G. L. Moore 4 8 0... R. Brinkley 7 2
- 12.00-31 ANKINGTON GIRL (12) P. Moore 4 7 12... C. Cogan 7 11 B
- 13.00-31 FAIRLY SURE (14) N. Barry 7 7 12... A. Poll 3 3
- 14.00-31 TACHYCARDIA (16) (C) N. Barry 7 7 12... N. Cardale 5

BETTING: 7-2 Alameda, 4-1 Speedy Classic, 5-1 Jivors's Deed, 7-1 Comeoutoffhog, 8-1 Tachycardia, 10-1 Pericles, Dark Menace, 14-1 Jivors

FORM GUIDE

This looks like a good opportunity for ALANEM who was quite eye-catching over 9m last week (could have finished a lot closer with a clear run) and will not be inconvenienced by the drop back to 7f. The obvious danger is Speedy Classic who seldom runs a bad race here.

2.50 WHY NOT SPONSOR A RACE MAIDEN STAKES (C) £5,250 added 1m 2f

- 1.50-42 BAAJIL (5) D. Cragg 4 9 11... A. McElroy 4
- 2.00-42 DEBOLA (2) J. Wimmer 4 9 11... J. McElroy 7 3
- 2.50-42 KENNET (7) P. Cragg 4 9 11... J. Callaghan 7
- 3.00-42 KENTURRY P. Cragg 4 9 11... S. Whitworth 5
- 3.50-42 MANA MUSA (20) M. Channon 4 9 11... Candy Morris 5
- 4.00-42 SHANTUNG (46) K. McElroy 4 9 11... A. Callaghan 2 V
- 4.50-42 KENTUCKY BULLET (18) (C) M. Johnston 5 8 4... J. Fitzpatrick 6
- 5.00-42 SATIRA (12) M. G. Kellogg 3 8 4... T. Smith 6 1

BETTING: 2-1 Mania Mosa, 5-2 BaaJil, 9-2 Kennet, 8-1 Kentucky Bullet, 7-1 Satira, 20-1 Shantung, 25-1 Kiburry, 35-1 Debola

FORM GUIDE

This modest maiden can go to BAAJIL, who showed improved form upped in trip over today's C&D last week. Mania Mosa and Kennet have every chance if reproducing their turf form while Kentucky Bullet is likely to do better with his debut experience behind him, but the others make no appeal.

3.20 ARENA LEISURE PLC STAKES (CLASS C) £9,000 added 1m

- 1.00-31 STEAMROLLER STAMMY (18) (C) K. Bule 6 9 2... S. Whitworth 1
- 2.00-31 GRAHAMMO (18) (C) N. Johnston 4 9 10... T. G. McLaughlin 2 B
- 3.00-31 ITALIAN SYMPHONY (17) (C) P. Moore 5 9 10... C. Cogan 7 2 V
- 4.00-31 MAURFAR (17) (C) G. Kellogg 4 9 10... P. Frederick 7 2 V
- 5.00-31 FLYING OFFICER (16) (C) S. M. Prescott 3 8 7... C. Kester 5

BETTING: 4-5 Flying Officer, 7-2 Grahammo, 11-2 Steamroller Stanny, 8-1 Italian Symphony, 20-1 Maurfar

FORM GUIDE

The big question is whether the step up to a mile will find out FLYING OFFICER who is clearly one of the top performers on Sunday.

However with two of his main rivals returning from a long break he may not need to be at his best today anyway. Despite yesterday's Wolverhampton disappointment, Italian Symphony may be the best option for those wishing to oppose the favourite.

3.50 DON LAING HAPPY RETIREMENT HANDICAP (C) £5,250 added 1m 2f

- 1.00-31 ANAKAU (13) (C) G. Kellogg 6 9 10... P. Frederick 7 2
- 2.00-31 BARBARON (18) (C) (C) G. L. Moore 7 9 10... Candy Morris 5
- 3.00-31 BOLD ORIENTAL (16) (C) (C) J. Harty 5 9 10... A. Clark 4
- 4.00-31 TOTTUM (24) (C) J. P. Moore 4 9 5... W. Ryan 1 V
- 5.00-31 MASTER CASTER (22) (C) G. Kellogg 4 9 5... M. Taylor 5
- 6.00-31 JONES ARROW (18) (C) P. Harty 4 9 2... J. Quinn 6
- 7.00-31 NOI DE DANSE (16) (C) M. Quinn 4 8 8... F. Norton 7

BETTING: 11-4 Kiburry, 3-1 Barbaron, 5-2 Master Caster, 5-1 Totum, 8-1 Anakau, 10-1 Bold Oriental, 10-1 Noi De Danse

FORM GUIDE

There has to be a doubt about Barbaron over today's longer trip, while Anakau has not been at his best for some time and Bold Oriental is far from reliable. However today's C&D brought out the best in TOTUM when she won a maiden in November that has worked out well and she can confirm her superiority over Kings Arrow.

4.20 JAPONICA HANDICAP (CLASS E) £3,500 added 3Y0 7f

- 1.00-31 GRAND CORONET (14) (C) T. Mills 9 7... S. Whitworth 3
- 2.00-31 TRAWA PET (25) J. Budge 8 4... P. Cogan 7 11 B
- 3.00-31 BLASTURNY (18) (C) (C) P. Harty 9 4... J. Spence 7
- 4.00-31 DOME AND DUSTED (20) (C) R. Brotherton 9 4... F. Norton 10
- 5.00-31 LOUGHLANES (14) (C) D. Nicholls 9 3... J. Callaghan 6
- 6.00-31 SHAWASHA (12) P. Harty 9 2... J. Callaghan 6
- 7.00-31 TROUBLE (22) P. Moore 8 1... T. G. McLaughlin 2 B
- 8.00-31 DIAMOND GEEZER (9) (C) R. Harty 8 7 (Red)... P. Frederick 7 B
- 9.00-31 FAMILY TREE (3) D. Chapman 8 7... J. Harty 5 10
- 10.00-31 MASTER THESE (19) T. M. Jones 8 1... J. Callaghan 2
- 11.00-31 BRATLEY (9) (C) M. Bial 7 12... A. Beach 7 B

BETTING: 7-9 Bratley, 5-2 Dome And Dusted, 8-1 Grand Coronet, Loughlanes, 7-1 Shawasha, Diamond Geeser, 8-1 Trava Pet, 12-1 others

FORM GUIDE

Loughlanes and Diamond Geeser come here on the back of good efforts and have to be respected, but GRAND CORONET could just be a cut above them all and has a decent draw today.

TOMORROW

Are the France rugby union team good enough to win a third successive Grand Slam? Richard Williams reports from Paris

SNOW REPORTS in association with WorldCover Direct

SKI HOTLINE		Resort	Area open	Comment	Slopes (cm)	Last snow	Temp	Forecast
					Lwr	Upr		
		ANDORRA						
		PAU	100%	Good skiing	100	125	27.1	-8C Mild
		AUSTRIA						
		Galtur	100%	Fresh powder	110	170	29.1	-6C Unsled
		Kirchdorf	100%	Stetnplate + good 110	200	30	-5C Cold, mixed	
		BULGARIA						
		Borovets	90%	Much improved	40	60	02.2	-8C Changeable
		CANADA						
		Lake Louise	100%	Fresh powder	45	230	01.2	-18C Clear, sunny
		FRANCE						
		Les Deux	90%	Snow needed	30	80	29.1	-5C Changeable
		Val d'Isere	90%	Good everywhere	125	190	28.1	-10C Changeable
		ITALY						
		Bormio	60%	Rienzo still open	40	80	28.1	0C Cloudy
		Madisimo	100%	Valle di Lei good	80	200	29.1	-5C Changeable
		NORWAY						
		Voss	80%	Good conditions	50	110	24.1	-2C Cloudy
		SCOTLAND						
		Nevis Range	0%	Windy	30	40	29.1	3C Rain showers
		SWITZERLAND						
		Verbier	95%	Avalanche danger	95	150	29.1	-6C Cold, clear
		UNITED STATES						
		Killington	50%	Re-frozen snow	30	100	26.1	-16C Clear

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Sacked England coach may be in demand on Continent but his agent rules out immediate move to Monaco

Hoddle targets swift return to Premiership

GLENN HODDLE does not blame his ignominious departure as the England coach on the media and he hopes to be back in management, possibly in the Premiership, within a few months.

"At the end of the day Glenn's a football manager, a brilliant coach, and I'd hope there'd be a number of Premier League clubs in situations [in the near future] where he could do a job for them," Dennis Roach, Hoddle's agent, said yesterday.

Roach added that Hoddle did not feel he had lost his job through being hounded by an unjust press. "It was not the English press or the football press that got Glenn out of the job," Roach said, referring to the way the media had reported Hoddle's beliefs in reincarnation.

"Glenn made a mistake. What got him out of the job was an error of judgement," Hoddle's immediate priority is to take a holiday, Roach said. "Then he'll come back and review the situation."

Suggestions that Hoddle is due to leave for Monaco today to discuss a new position were untrue, Roach added. "It's never a no-no, but there is nothing in that situation at the moment," he said.

The French side have shown an interest in Hoddle's services in the past and since releasing their coach, Jean Tigana, have struggled to perform consistently under the caretaker, Claude Puel, whose contract expires in the summer.

Hoddle enjoyed success as a player with Monaco under Arsène Wenger - including winning the French championship in 1988 - and although the club themselves have denied any current interest in Hoddle, an approach later in the year remains possible.

Equally feasible would be an approach from Spain. Pressure has been growing in recent days on Guus Hiddink, the coach at Real Madrid, a club that offered Hoddle a job before he took the England reins from Terry Venables.

BY NICK HARRIS

Hiddink offended Real supporters with a recent interview in which he said: "Real Madrid are a famous club with a huge reputation but little money and large debts."

Should the former Netherlands coach leave, Hoddle may be shortlisted to take over a side that will include Steve McManaman come the summer. Hoddle's current predicament is unlikely to damage his prospects in Spain, where top clubs care less about any eccentricity in their coaches' views than their ability to secure points.

As one leading Spanish newspaper's football editor said yesterday: "Our own coaches, including Javier Clemente [the former national coach, now with Real Betis], say stupid things from time to time. But however weird their personal opinions, no one cares until they start losing matches."

Controversial departures do not necessarily prevent successful reincarnations in the game, as George Graham proved with a return to management after a year in exile. For Hoddle's part, doubts over his image - especially his views on faith healing and his attachment to Eileen Dwyer - should not hinder his career as long as he reappraises how he deals with the media.

Max Clifford, the public relations expert, is no stranger to rehabilitating reputations, and he said Hoddle simply needs guidance on how to conduct himself. "He'll be back in football, back in management," Clifford said. "It won't be long."

Clifford said he would advise Hoddle to be clear in his own mind what messages he wanted to put across to the media before he gave interviews. "The first thing I'd do [if he was a client] is sit him down and draft a Parkinson-style interview. I'd say to him 'No Glenn, don't say things that way, you're just confusing people.' You'd have to teach him to play that [PR] game. Having

done that he could start putting the record straight."

Clifford added that Hoddle should not go abroad searching for work if his motivation is merely to escape pressure. "Then you're throwing in the towel. You're not standing up to be counted. Glenn has got to clear up the current mess and then he's got loads of options."

England managers since the war have had mixed experiences in their post-international years. Sir Alf Ramsey managed Birmingham for a year between 1977 and 1978 and then retired. Don Revie never returned to the English game after deserting the national side and taking a job in Saudi Arabia, and Ron Greenwood retired from management.

Of the last three managers, Bobby Robson has been the most successful, winning domestic titles with PSV Eindhoven and Porto, as well as managing Sporting Lisbon and Barcelona, where he won the Cup Winners' Cup, but he has not (yet) tried his hand back on the domestic scene. Graham Taylor went to Wolves and is currently doing good things at Watford (for a second time), while Terry Venables experienced little but trouble at Portsmouth and Crystal Palace. His stint in charge of the Australian national side, which ended with defeat to Iran in a World Cup qualifying play-off, was his post-England high point.

This range of experiences gives a taste of the options, domestic and international, that might await Hoddle. Dennis Roach anticipates his client will receive offers from a wide range of potential employers, and does not discount a job in England outside the top flight. Hoddle's time at Swindon, he said, had been "some of his happiest in the game." Wherever Hoddle works next, Roach is confident it will be in coaching, and confident it will be soon. "He'll be back," he said.

What goes around, comes around, especially in football.

Additional reporting by Elizabeth Nash in Spain



Glenn Hoddle appears briefly outside his home in Berkshire yesterday.

THE HODDLE YEARS

ENGLAND'S RECORD

P28 W17 D6 L5 F42 A15
(Total by England: 100 goals scored, 25 conceded)
World Cup 1990: Second round.
European Championship 1992: Currently third in qualifying group.

HODDLE'S 41 PLAYERS

Appearances plus substitute appearances

* Given debut by Hoddle

Campbell	21+1
Ince	19+2
Southgate	19+2
Le Saux	18+2
Seaman	18
Shearer	17+1
Beckham	17+1
G Neville	15+2
Batty	13+6
Sheringham	13+6
Scholes	13+1
Gascoigne	12+2
Adams	11
Anderton	10
P Neville	9+2
Lee	8+4
Keown	8
Wright	7+6
Owen	7+5
Hinchcliffe	7
McManaman	6
Pearce	6
Martin	5
L Ferdinand	4+3
Merson	3+3
R Ferdinand	3+2
Redknapp	3+2
Dublin	3+1
Flowers	3
Butt	2+4
Fowler	2
Pallister	1+1
Le Tissier	1+1
Barnaby	1
Walker	1
James	1
Hendrie	0+1
Collymore	0+1
Ripley	0+1
Cole	0+1
Sutton	0+1

Also called up but not capped: Stone, Draper, Howey, Platt, Marcano, May, Bowyer, Scoles, Eadie, Clark, Heskey, Hissop, Pressman, Farouk, R Wright.

Goals: Shearer 12 (2 pen), Sheringham 5 (1 pen), Wright 4, Scholes 4, Owen 4, Gascoigne 2, Fowler 2, Anderton 2, Merson 2, L Ferdinand 1, Lee 1, Barnaby 1, Beckham 1, Southgate 1.

TYPICAL HODDLE ENGLAND TEAM (3-5-2): Seaman; G Neville, Southgate, Campbell, Beckham, Gascoigne, Ince, Batty, Le Saux; Shearer, Sheringham.

McAllister praises Wilkinson's ways

HOWARD WILKINSON will bring a new set of beliefs to the job of England manager - some good old-fashioned Yorkshire work ethic topped up with an addition to fitness.

No one knows the man who has filled Glenn Hoddle's tracksuit better than the Scotland captain, Gary McAllister, the midfield general of his title-winning Leeds team. McAllister believes he owes more than his Championship medal to the experienced manager who has stepped into the breach. If it was not for Wilkinson, his career might be over.

Still playing in the top flight at 34, McAllister said: "Howard gave me fitness I didn't have. My body changed at Leeds even though I was 25 when I got there. He made us appreciate that if you can run longer you have a better chance. If you are

BY ALAN NIXON

a good player and can run longer, it's better still.

"Pre-season training was like nothing I had ever seen before. There was an awful lot of thought going into it, it was structured. You didn't just run up to a tree and back again. Howard was right. That has stood me in good stead and probably lengthened my career. We do the same stuff at Coventry now because Gordon Strachan [Coventry's manager] had obviously listened to him."

McAllister claimed Wilkinson was something of a visionary in that department and is unhappy that Arsenal's manager, Arsène Wenger, took praise for the same ideas when he won the Double. He said: "It was an insult to hear Arsenal's methods

were new. Howard had brought in special diets, introduced us to creative and worked on stretching exercises years ago. Howard is an ultra-professional. I think it all goes back to that Yorkshire work ethic, he let you know you needed an honest day's work for an honest day's pay. "It was new to me because I had been under David Platt at Leicester where they would rather draw 4-4, play total football and entertain than win 1-0 and bore. I learned that results are what matter. It could be a dog of a game for 89 minutes but then you score one and win. That was your job. That suggests he is down - but he's not. There was plenty of banter about and it was a happy enough place."

McAllister is also sure that Wilkinson's lack of experience at the

top international level will not be a handicap when the critics start to look for ammunition. He said: "There are so many big-name players who have tried and failed at management that the argument doesn't really work any more."

"Arsène Wenger has never won medals but is at the top of his profession. Howard will not get fazed or worry about handling top players, but it would be a help to bring in a good No 2."

"Howard won't be able to teach these players new tricks like Glenn Hoddle could, so he does need an ex-England man beside him. David Platt did that before at youth level and could be the man. I hope Howard enjoys working with the best players in England. I think, like most other things, he will be good at it."

HOW THEY BET

NEXT PERMANENT ENGLAND MANAGER

	C	H	L
H Wilkinson	11-8	5-4	5-4
T Venables	5-2	5-1	5-2
K Keegan	4-1	4-1	4-1
R Hodgson	6-1	6-1	6-1
D Platt	8-1	10-1	10-1
Bryan Robson	11-2	10-1	-
J Gregory	16-1	12-1	12-1
Bobby Robson	25-1	25-1	-
A Wenger	20-1	12-1	25-1
M O'Neill	28-1	20-1	25-1
G Hoddle	33-1	25-1	33-1
G Graham	33-1	33-1	50-1
D Platt	28-1	50-1	25-1
P Reid	50-1	25-1	50-1
A Ferguson	50-1	50-1	66-1
R Gullit	66-1	35-1	66-1

C Coral, H William Hill, L Ladbrokes

When smiling came back in fashion

WHEN TONY WADDINGTON was appointed manager of Stoke City, his first congratulatory call came from Joe Mercer. "My advice is never to trust anyone in the game," the new incumbent at the Victoria Ground was told, "and when I put down this phone don't trust me either."

Rubbish, of course. Mercer was one of the gentlemen managers who helped far more than he ever hindered and, when the Football Association had to find someone to trust in the wake of Alf Ramsey's dismissal as England's manager in 1974, it was to "Genial Joe" that it turned.

At the age of 59, he was suddenly projected from being a successful former club manager to looking after England in what was arguably even more traumatic a time than the current post-Glenn Hoddle muddle.

A climate of crisis reigned that early summer after the removal of Ramsey, the winner of the World Cup in 1966 and creator of arguably the finest modern national side four years later. A huge void was left which Mercer was asked to fill while the FA negotiated for a successor.

He did so with a huge beam on his face, lifting the gloom almost as soon as he walked into Lancaster Gate. It was a charm offensive that owed nothing to spin doctors or PR executives, but Mercer's good instincts. He knew a sense of shock pervaded the nation in the wake of failure

The only previous England caretaker, Joe Mercer, did the job with some style after the exit of Alf Ramsey. By Guy Hodgson

after a decade of England success and he deliberately chose players to alter the mood.

Alec Lindsay was a case in point. Mercer was short of a left-back and chose the good but not great Liverpool defender because of his demeanour. "He always played with a smile on his face," the manager reasoned later. "I thought he'd be a good man to have in the dressing-room."

Undoubtedly the knowledge that he was not being considered as a permanent appointment - negotiations were going on with Ramsey's ultimate successor, Don Revie, almost immediately - eradicated pressure, but Mercer could hardly be faulted for lack of boldness in his selections.

In his first match in charge, a 2-0 win over Wales in Cardiff, he made Emyr Hughes captain and gave Leicester's Keith Weller his debut in an attacking line-up unfettered by rigid tactical restraints that also included Stan Bowles, Kevin Keegan and Mike Channon. Later in his seven-game tenure he gave Frank Worthington the first of his eight caps.

It was heady, exciting stuff that made the rest of the world regret England's absence from the 1974 World Cup finals in Germany never mind exasperated of Exeter or frustrated of

Fulham. If nothing else, it was a reminder that football could be fun after the occasional bitterness and negativity of Ramsey's final days.

In the *News Of The World* Football Annual of 1974-75, Frank Butler wrote: "The side played with a new freedom, without tension, and even England's most severe critics agreed the team would have done well in the World Cup."

Mercer's success in the twilight of a lengthy career was the more remarkable because he had failed as a manager many years before. The



Mercer: Genial stop-gap

winner of three championships and an FA Cup with Everton and Arsenal as a player, he was sacked by Aston Villa in the early 60s and the impact was so great on him that he was seriously ill.

He considered retiring to run a grocery business, but was persuaded to return to the game by Manchester City in 1965 where his shrewdest move was to pluck a dynamic young coach from Plymouth Argyle, Malcolm Allison, and appoint him his assistant.

It was an inspired choice. Before Allison fired of being No 2 and had Mercer quietly kicked upstairs, the older man's geniality and diplomacy became the perfect foil for the brashness and tactical innovation of the apprentice, and the championship was won in 1968, the FA Cup a year later and the European Cup-Winners' Cup and the League Cup in 1970.

When Joe Mercer and I were friends, no one in football could live with us. Allison recalled in his book *Colours Of My Life*. "I charged into situations like a bull, full of aggressive ambition and contempt for anyone who might be standing in the way. And Joe came behind me, picking up the pieces, soothing the wounded with that vast charm."

HOWARD WILKINSON: WORDS FROM A PREVIOUS INCARNATION

1995
If I am ever reincarnated, I'd like to return as a personality

1989
Don't ask me whether it was a good game. It'd be like asking a surgeon if it was a good operation

1995
There's only two types of manager. Those who've been sacked and those who will be sacked in the future

1993
I'm healthy, I've got a house, I eat well - how can I be unhappy? There's thousands with none of these things

1992
Journalists arrived from all over Europe to meet him [Eric Cantona]. He gave interviews on art, philosophy and politics. A natural room-mate for David Batty, I thought immediately (before the rift with Cantona)

... AND HOW OTHERS SEE HIM

1996
Wilko for England! Leeds fans' chant during 5-0 defeat at Liverpool

1991
There are bigger heads than mine in the First Division. Howard Wilkinson's springs to mind

1999
At the end [of his team talks] we'd be thinking: 'Eh?' David Batty

1996
Batty is a really good player, a good passer. Howard Wilkinson curbed his style at Leeds, made Batts more disciplined than expansive

1992
There's a great deal of psychology involved in running a football team and Howard understands the psyche of the modern player better than most

Howard Kendall, after Leeds' Championship season

1993
The England manager has to fight the system and the press from day one

1990
A myth has grown up that football should in some way strive to be entertaining.

Sport is not entertainment. It's an activity for the benefit of the participants. If you run away from that you risk having the wrong pipers calling the tune

1996
A manager is not self-employed. If he's not in the directors' hands, he's in the players' hands. And if he's not in the fans' hands (days before sacking by Leeds)

1992
Life has to be lived forwards, but can only be viewed backwards (slogan on Hoddle's office wall)

1994
His comments were strange and rather incoherent. One moment he would tell me that he wants me to know that I owe everything to him, that I am only a Frenchman lost in the English League, and at other times he would say that without me the team is nothing

Eric Cantona

1992
Preparation was, and still is, an obsession with Wilkinson...

At Wednesday, I got the impression he thought he could transform a squad of competent players into a team capable of competing with the best. He also believed he could transform the fortunes of problem players

Lee Chapman

1998
I know it sounds nuts, but I thought I was signing for Howard Kendall. He was the only Howard I'd really heard of

Vinnie Jones

COMPILED BY PHIL SHAW



SPORT

ENGLAND FIRED UP FOR FIVE NATIONS P22 • COE'S DRUG OFFENSIVE P25



Ferguson heads FA's wanted list

THE POSSIBILITY of a Scottish accent delivering English rallying calls strengthened yesterday support as a groundswell of support developed within the Football Association for Alex Ferguson's candidacy as Glenn Hoddle's successor.

Senior FA figures, anxious to settle the issue as soon as possible, began discussing names within hours of Hoddle's departure and Ferguson's was prominent. The FA had confirmed it was prepared to seek a non-English manager and some within the organisation believe the Manchester United manager's qualifications outweigh the fact of his Tartan allegiance. Indeed, he was close to being approached three

BY GLENN MOORE
Football Correspondent

years ago, before Hoddle was appointed.

While United had already declared Ferguson off limits the 56-year-old, who managed Scotland at the 1986 World Cup following Jock Stein's death, had made no official comment prior to the club's match at home to Derby County last night. Not that this mattered. The FA is aware that managers who renege an interest in public may not be so dismissive if actually offered the post. For that reason Kevin Keegan, though he said yesterday he wanted to stay with Fulham, has not been ruled out.

Other candidates include

Bryan Robson, Arsène Wenger, Roy Hodgson, Bobby Robson, Terry Venables, Gérard Houllier, David Platt, Peter Reid and the caretaker, Howard Wilkinson. Like Keegan, Bryan Robson, Wenger and Houllier have ruled themselves out of the running. Robson's denial is the most convincing. He turned down the job before it was offered to Hoddle. Hodgson and Venables are both available, but there are reservations about them. Bobby Robson would be a short-term solution, he is into his sixties but could be teamed with Platt, whom he gave an England debut to as a player and is probably too inexperienced to take the job at present. Reid has influential supporters around the

FA. While Wilkinson has his feet under the table, he said yesterday that he had not considered whether he would want the job permanently and would not do so until after Wednesday's match with France. Although the list includes some worthy contenders, Ferguson's CV is better than any. He would also be a popular choice with the Government. Ferguson is closer to leading Labour figures than is commonly realised. Born in Govan, Glasgow, on New Year's Eve 1941, he was a tough centre-forward who had a brief spell with Rangers. They were the club he followed from the terraces as a boy, but the association ended unhappily after

he was blamed for a Scottish Cup defeat by Celtic. He went into management at East Stirling in 1974 before moving on, via St Mirren, to Aberdeen. He led them to their greatest period of success, winning three league championships, four Scottish Cups and the 1983 European Cup-Winners' Cup. This array of trophies appears even more impressive in the context of the club's history. Outside Ferguson's reign they have won just one other league title and three further Scottish Cups. In November 1986, he moved to Manchester United, where he struggled initially before gaining himself time with the 1990 FA Cup success. The European

Cup-Winners' Cup followed a year later, sparking a run of success that has seen United become the game's dominant force. They have won four of the six Premier League titles, not finished out of the top two in seven years, won two more FA Cups and one League Cup. They have also reached the semi-finals of the European Cup but not won it. That is where the FA's biggest problem lies. United would doubtless fight hard to keep Ferguson - think of the effect on their share price should he leave - but his relations with the board have not always been warm and if he wanted to go, he probably would. But, while the footballing challenge of the England job

may appeal to him - though he has jokingly suggested in the past he would only take it "to get England relegated" - he is obsessed with winning the European Cup for United. If United overcome Internazionale in next month's quarter-final he may be hard to prise away before the season's end. This need not be an insurmountable problem. Wilkinson indicated yesterday he may be prepared to extend his caretakership until then if required. Since he and Ferguson are close, they could even work in tandem for a while. This is not as far-fetched as it sounds. When Ferguson led Scotland he did so part-time, combining the job with his duties at Aberdeen.

The England job may be bigger but Ferguson is well aware of the squad's capabilities and has several of them at his club. In international weeks there are probably more United players at Bisham than Old Trafford. The question marks concern his sometimes tetchy dealings with the media, especially the capital's tabloid press, his occasional outbursts against referees, his nationality and even his identification with United. Plus, would he want to subject his family to all the hysteria? There is only one way to find out but the FA is not likely to ask him just yet. The priority is next week's game with France. However, it would be no surprise if discreet enquiries were made.

Cole given chance to redeem himself

SO NOW we know. In his final hours Glenn Hoddle discovered forgiveness. In his last act as England coach, Hoddle had recalled Andy Cole, the man who had used the front page of *The Sun* to brand Hoddle a "coward" for not selecting him in November. Hoddle was, however, going to give him the chance to be involved in next Wednesday's Wembley friendly with France.

In the months to come Chris Sutton and Paul Gascoigne, though probably not Matt Le Tissier, whose international days seem to be over, might also have been recalled from their banishment. That may yet happen, but it will not be Hoddle conducting the rapprochement.

There was a certain poignancy about reading his last squad list when it was issued at Wembley yesterday. It had shades of reading a letter from someone who had departed since writing. Here were plans that will now never be completed, dreams that will never be fulfilled. Hoddle had also called up Kieron Dyer, the talented Ipswich youngster. What role had he planned for him? And would Cole have played?

That task now falls to Howard Wilkinson, the caretaker manager, who said he decided it would be best to select Hoddle's squad as planned - "no additions, no subtractions" - in the interests of continuity. It is the right decision.

Any differences would probably be over the fringe positions. With one or two

BY GLENN MOORE

high-profile exceptions, Hoddle largely picked the right squads.

From his last party line Wright, David Batty, Emile Heskey and Lee Hendrie drop out; Michael Owen, Tony Adams and Paul Ince are recalled. All but Hendrie's absence and Ince's return are enforced by injury. Hendrie, who made a

ENGLAND SQUAD	
(Friendly v France, Wembley, Wednesday 10 February)	
Marryn	(Leeds Utd)
Wright	(Ipswich)
Seaman	(Aston Villa)
R Ferdinand	(West Ham)
Campbell	(Tottenham)
Southern	(Aston Villa)
G Neville	(Manchester Utd)
Adams	(Aston Villa)
Keown	(Aston Villa)
Anderson	(Tottenham)
Dyer	(Ipswich)
Le Saux	(Sheff Wed)
Hinchcliffe	(Sheff Wed)
Beckham	(Manchester Utd)
Scholes	(Manchester Utd)
Ince	(Liverpool)
Butt	(Manchester Utd)
Merson	(Aston Villa)
Shearer	(Newcastle)
Owen	(Liverpool)
Fowler	(Liverpool)
Cole	(Manchester Utd)
Dubin	(Aston Villa)

sprightly debut against the Czech Republic in November but admits he is now in poor form, will be in the Under-21 squad, which is named today.

Ince, who is suspended from next month's European Championship qualifier against Poland, is unlikely to play. That

was Hoddle's intention, with FA backing, and Wilkinson is unlikely to dissent.

It is probable that Wilkinson will switch to 4-4-2, however. Most players are happier with that and, as he said at the FA Coaches' Association Conference in November: "My particular preference is for four at the back. I think the demands of the modern game... make it extremely difficult for wing-backs to cover the ground they are supposed to."

If he adheres to this, the only problem is on the left, where the lack of suitable players means he may be forced to push Graeme Le Saux forward and bring in Andy Hinchcliffe at left-back.

Wilkinson said: "I have to decide what is achievable in the three days I will have with the players. I have not got a magic wand. Ideally, the fans will see players who are only happy to give 10 out of 10 for effort and feel secure enough to express themselves. I am not going to be stupid enough to claim more than my share of credit in the event of a super victory, nor will I take more than my share of the blame."

As for Cole, he said: "In my view, he is a very good player, in finishing terms his record speaks for itself. It was no surprise to me he was included. It's a terrific squad. You'd be happy taking it to Aston Villa."

With respect to the Premiership challenges, the world champions are a more formidable prospect. Last night's football, page 27



England's caretaker coach, Howard Wilkinson (left), faces the press at Wembley yesterday, accompanied by the FA's David Davies. Peter Jay

Smooth transition by relaxed Wilkinson

THE LAST time Howard Wilkinson made a public appearance at Wembley he was booed off the pitch by Leeds United supporters after their team's abject League Cup defeat by Aston Villa in 1996, writes Glenn Moore.

Maybe it was that memory that sustained him yesterday for, as he faced a media which, in many quarters, is being accused of "hounding" Glenn Hoddle out of his job, he could not have looked more relaxed.

He spoke at length, leaving a thoughtful plea for England managers to be better supported by the Football Association with a dash of humour. "When I got home last night my wife questioned my sanity - but that's nothing new, she does that all the time," he said.

"I could have said 'no' to the job but I felt the downside was less than the upside. If we win against France next week I will be able to put 'England manager' on my CV 'best of the world champions'. Then when the manager of Mongolia gets the sack I can send that off."

There was none of the fractious hostility which had characterised Hoddle's final press conferences, nor were there rambling references to spirituality. As a new man, Wilkinson was given a gentle ride but his manner suggested that, when it came to the political aspects of the job, he could be a capable caretaker.

"Clearly taking charge of a national team is a great honour

in whatever circumstances," he said. "The honour quickly disappears when I get into the details. At the moment my head is all over the place. I have a list of things to do with 30 items on it."

Wilkinson looked to be relishing the occasion but said he "had not even considered" whether he wanted to take the job permanently and would not do so until after Wednesday's game, the result of which would not influence his decision.

What did he expect the mood of the squad to be when they meet up on Sunday night? "In my experience," he said, "players vary. Some form an emotional attachment to a manager. Some don't like him. Some just turn up and play."

He said he had slept well on Tuesday night, only to be woken before six by the first press phone call. He added: "I've seen how managers like Ron Greenwood and Bobby Robson have suffered. A lot is talked about the pressures of the media but that is the reality of life. There was a time in my naive youth when I thought I could change that - I now know better."

With reference to that he said: "The FA's structures do not give the manager enough support: they let Glenn down. It is not an impossible job, it is up to the employer to make it possible." He then referred to improving continuity of staff - most England managers bring in their own men and discard the knowledge acquired by others.

The use of computers to record information about opponents and players was mentioned and the establishment of a national football centre like the French have at Clairefontaine. This, like some of the other reforms, is on the way, a product of Wilkinson's work as technical director.

He spoke to Hoddle yesterday lunchtime. "He wished me all the best and said if he could be of assistance to give him a bell. What happened to him is sad. It is not pleasant if someone loses their job. But it is the nature of the beast, of the job we choose to do. It does have a lot of advantages. In some cases the money's very good and it's nice to work with players, to go to football matches and win them, to see your team perform."

Wilkinson managed clubs from Boston and Notts County to Sheffield Wednesday and Leeds for 24 years to 1996. Had he missed it? "I haven't missed arriving on the team bus at a ground and seeing a 38-year-old man with a seven-year-old son moaning obscenities at the window."

However long he reigns as England manager one hopes he is spared that but, if temporary becomes permanent, it would seem an inevitable fate at some point. That is the nature of the beast he now rides. That is what Wilkinson will be pondering as he considers his next move.

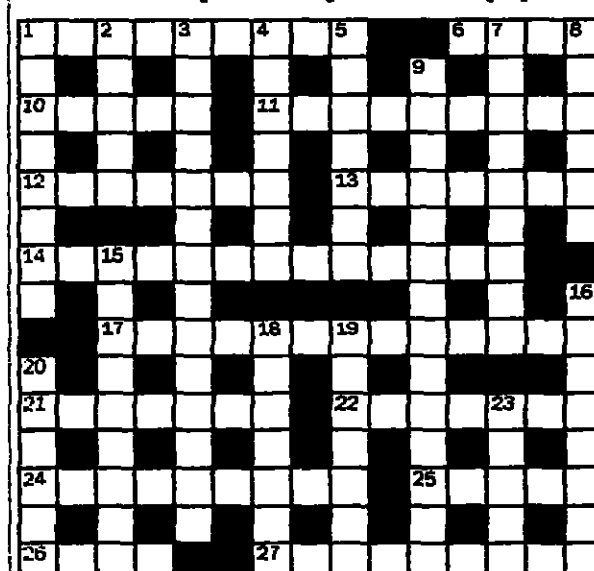
England succession, page 26

THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No 3837 Thursday 4 February

by Sparius

Wednesday's solution



- ACROSS**
- Wish for departure from France (3,6)
 - Non-striker seriously concerned about bowling initially (4)
 - Smooth passage, if long, penned by French writer (5)
 - Fourteenth card forming part of suit? (9)
 - Garment covering wife's bottom, adorned with royal insignia (7)
 - Slit left in carton (7)
 - Centre ended up vandalised - it's without parallel (13)
 - Walk on water? (9,4)
 - Nut's first to wear gold ring? Second or third, maybe (7)
 - One engaged in barter

- DOWN**
- Publication a major problem? (3,5)
 - Din made by one in front (5)
 - Sort of medicine to make you flake out, then recover? (4-3-7)
 - Commercial jingle, not very good (7)
 - Wherby class see one bit of planet obscured? (7)

OPENING WORDS
C O N A I N E
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A R B I N I N G I E
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O P A M I S E R
A C C I D E N T A L
S T O I C I E N M E A N T I S E

- 7** American flier hacked ice in pieces (9)
8 Inspiration about to occur in course of ablution? (6)
9 "Maverick" subtitled in French? (6,8)
15 Unrealistic aspiration by one in degree course - minimally difficult paper (4-5)
16 Outlined method of treating the decks (8)
18 Poem English class go over, extremely unreadable (7)
19 Relief mission, look, supported by doctor with small surgery? (7)
20 Clown performing in silk overall? (6)
23 Mistakes often concealed by supporters? (5)

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Thursday 4 February 1999 Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

RISING DAMP? CONDENSATION? KISS THEM GOODBYE!

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 5. Dampsol tube
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سكدا من الاصل

Racist policing

Sir: I would have thought, after the tragic Stephen Lawrence affair, that the police would be bending over backward to improve their standing with the black community.

As a white male working as a broker in the City of London, I have not been stopped or questioned by the City Police. I have, however, witnessed several incidents where car drivers have been stopped by a number of police, sometimes armed. In all cases the drivers stopped have been black and the cars expensive. This has all happened in the past 18 months. Before that, I worked in Holborn, outside the City boundary and policed by the Metropolitan Police, and cannot remember a single similar incident there.

None of this had directly affected me or my company, until last weekend. We are spending a significant amount of money in upgrading our computer systems. Last weekend was critical for the changeover. To lose one of our key engineers for over two hours was disruptive and expensive. Why did he disappear? Because he went down to his car and was arrested. For what reason? None has been given. He is black.

Are we serious in our attempts to maintain the City as the world's primary banking, insurance and shipping market? If we are, then the medieval approach to civil liberties and racial tolerance will have to change. The City Police are funded by the financial success of the City itself and should not be antagonising the many talented black professionals who might like to work there or do business with it.

Our computer engineer does not wish to complain because he would rather forget the unpleasantness and in any case does not believe such complaint would have any effect. The situation makes me ashamed to be white.

COLIN CRIDLAND
Crawley, West Sussex

Sir: I have from the moment of being elected to office taken a very public stance over the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation ("Met 'ready to take a beating' on Lawrence", 2 February). I have acknowledged that it was not handled as well as it might have been and mistakes were made, the real Achilles heel of course being the first review of the inquiry ordered by the then senior officers in that area. The report was signed off and accepted as correct, and passed up the chain of command and relied upon as a shield to deflect criticism. That act has let down every Metropolitan Police officer regardless of rank.

The inquiry by Sir William McPherson will we hope point the way forward, and police officers will never again be placed in the same situation - without sufficient IT equipment, trained users and officers - as those at the centre of that process.

Metropolitan Police officers are outraged and angry that murderous racist thugs still walk the streets, but to put 25,000 officers on trial for something that didn't involve them and that they had no control over is another miscarriage of justice.

GLEN SMYTH
Chairman
Metropolitan Police Federation
Joint Executive Committee
London E14

Hounding of Hoddle

Sir: Poor old Hoddle, what has he done to deserve all this? Bad previous Karma perhaps?

There seems to be a great deal of ignorance on the subject flying around. Karma is a balancing mechanism, between negative and positive actions. It is not reward or punishment. Imbalance can be carried forward to another life. I have not heard Hoddle talk of punishment for previous sins - although just about anybody else commenting on his remarks has.

Most disabled people I know would say, "What a load of

rubbish", or, "If I sinned in a previous life, I hope I enjoyed it."

What is more remarkable is our fevered response. Why are we so keen to show our compassion for disadvantaged groups by jumping on anyone who seems to be lacking in such compassion? It all seems to be tied up with our highly sensitive emotional state. People are "devastated" very easily, and in need of "counseling" for the slightest unpleasant event. The reaction to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales was a good example of this delicate state. People seem to be on the verge of tears most of the time.

Come on England. Since when have we been so precious? Where is our much-acclaimed stoicism? What happened to our famous upper lip?

MIKE INGRAM
Peterborough

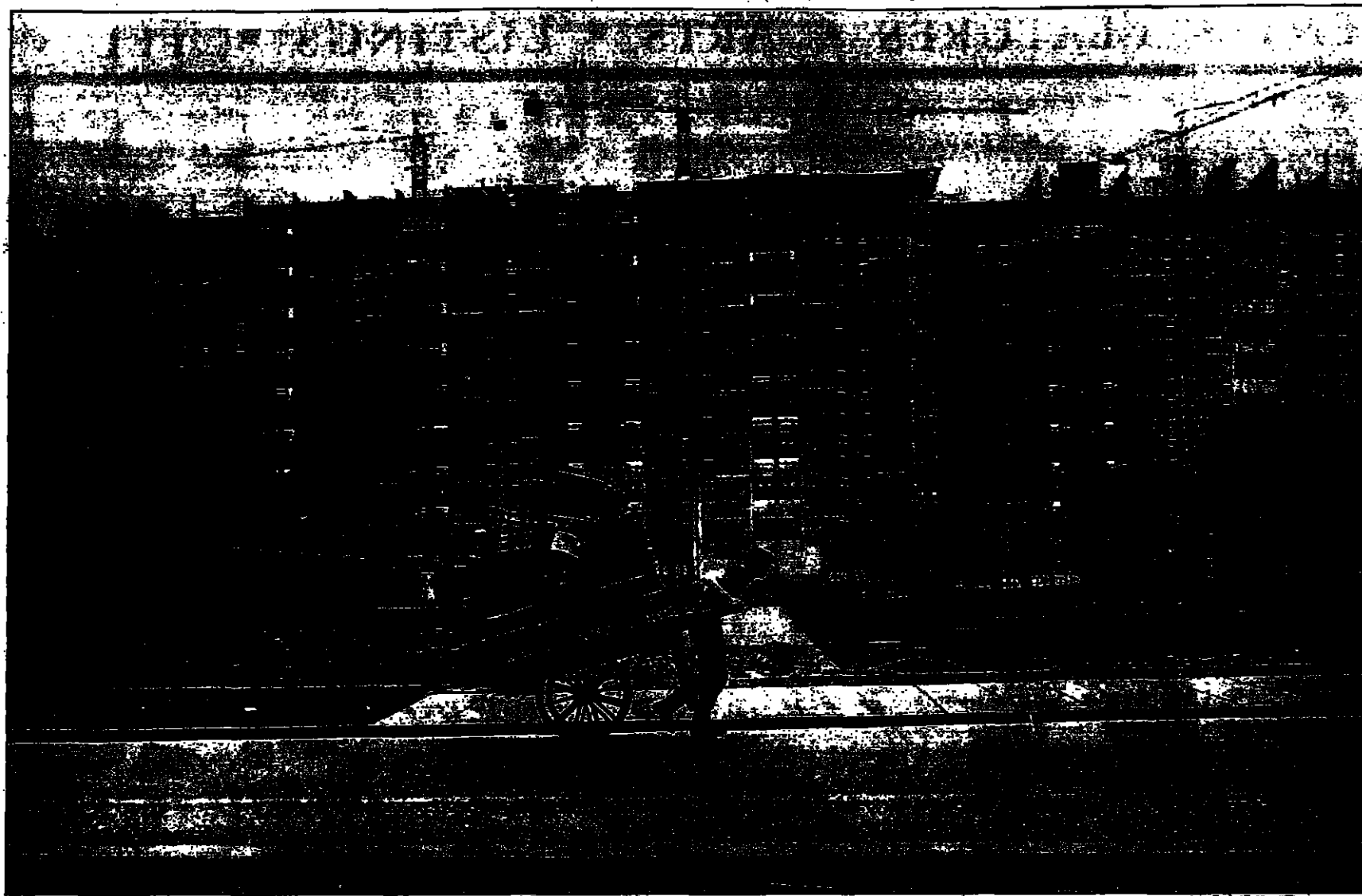
Sir: The FA should not have sacked Mr Hoddle over an issue unrelated to football, nor should they have expected him to keep his religious beliefs to himself. Religion is not a private matter, as this case demonstrates. It influences every aspect of the believer's life. At least Mr Hoddle was up-front about that.

What they should have done is insist that he take a course in Religious Studies and Theology. He would then have been taught to think critically about his own beliefs and those of others and he would have been introduced to disabled theology - a new branch of theology in which persons with disabilities reflect on their own experience and the construction put upon the disabled person in various religious traditions. Being forced to think through these issues properly would surely have been punishment enough. Professor ELIZABETH STUART
Chair of Christian Theology
King Alfred's College
Winchester

Sir: In order to spare us all another disgraceful spectacle like the Hoddle affair, I suggest that the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Independent Eye No 4: The high rises of the Gorbals going up in 1962. From 'An Independent Eye: A Century of Photographs' (Sutton, £20). © Hulton Getty

next England football team manager be chosen by a committee consisting of the Prime Minister and his colleagues and the editors and proprietors of various tabloid newspapers. ROSEMARY L. JOHNSON
Byfield, Northamptonshire

Off the dole

Sir: The percentage of leavers from New Deal returning to the "dole" is not 50 per cent, but only 3 per cent ("Blair praises New Deal", 29 January). A further 12 per cent are not able to work because they are on other benefits like sickness and incapacity benefit. Compared to the 100 per cent who were on benefit before we introduced the New Deal, I'd say the programme was proving its worth. The 58,000 young people who have found a job through New Deal so far would no doubt say the same.

Of the very small number who have left the full-time education and training option early - it lasts up to a year and most New Dealers are still on it - about half so far have gone straight into work and a majority of the rest on to other things rather than the dole.

Sir: "Men of the Irish Republican Army march through the streets of Dublin in 1922 at the beginning of the civil war" (Letters Page picture, 2 February). They, at least, had the courage to march unmasked - unlike their "followers" of today with whom I suspect those of 1922 would find very little in common. JOHN BURROWS
Leicester

Sir: I must correct one point in your article, "Nasa takes off in search of stardust" (3 February). The last extraterrestrial sample was returned to Earth by the Soviet robotic craft Luna 24, during

Finally, Damian Green's claim of an £11,000 per job cost is fabricated by loading all the investment up-front. It's a bit like dividing the whole cost of the Channel Tunnel by the number of passengers in the first six months. The true amount spent on each of those finding employment to date is around £1,000, although this figure will obviously rise as young people who have needed more investment through the options, come through and find jobs.

It is too early to calculate a meaningful average cost per job because the majority of the participants are still in the early stages of the programme. But it will be a lot less than £11,000, and good value too.

ANDREW SMITH
Minister for Employment
Department for Education and Employment
London SW1

Africa's agony

Sir: Your report by Alex Duval Smith on the wars tearing Africa apart was timely ("Misery engulfs millions as Africa seethes with more wars than ever", 30 January). You called the fighting in Congo-Brazzaville

a "civil war". Not so. Rather, it is democrats versus anti-democrats. The issues at stake are freedom versus repression.

The story is this. The former ruler, General Denis Sassou-N'Guesso, a Marxist dictator, was roundly beaten in the elections of 1992 - the first free and fair elections since independence 30 years earlier. Professor Pascal Lissouba became the first elected president, introducing "novel" concepts like freedom of speech, a market economy, an independent judiciary and, above all, autonomy at all levels of the country and the economy.

Sassou appeared undeterred by his election defeat, however. He resolved to return to power by force on the eve of 1997 elections, which he knew he would never win at the ballot box. Congo had achieved the highest per-capita debt of any country in the world after 20 years of his guidance. So why he imagined that the Congolese people would want him back - especially after a coup d'état and bloody power struggle - beggars belief.

Worse still, it is openly claimed by democrats of every political persuasion in Congo-Brazzaville

that France was behind the well-prepared and massively armed coup unleashed in 1997.

What is shameful is that so little criticism is voiced. Do we value democracy and civil liberties so little that we dare not speak out about the return of a cruel (and inefficient) dictator, who seizes power on the eve of elections and demolishes every pillar of civil society and every civil liberty in the country? Where is the freedom of the British press when it matters? ANTHONY McCALL-JUDSON
Communications adviser to
Professor Pascal Lissouba
London W1

Sir: I thought the Alex Duval Smith article about the conflict in Sierra Leone was compassionate in a Graham Greene-esque sort of way but not serious about the political situation in this horrific war. This is a democratically elected government and its electorate trying to defend its capital city from an army of well-armed and sadistic thugs.

I am in telephone contact with people still living in Freetown who tell me about the atrocities they have witnessed or heard about: whole families massacred in the process of looting; children and adults having their hands and arms chopped off; rape, it goes without saying; schools and hospitals burnt down. Many people have been without food for days and live in constant terror.

In my naivety I imagined that the West would be concerned about the fate of democratic government in Africa. England in particular "owes" Sierra Leone. The relationship is a long and intricate one. And what about the UN? Why do they appear to be washing their hands of this? Might it have something to do with the fact that Sierra Leone is of no strategic importance? Has no oil? Is already one of the poorest countries on earth? PAULINE PLUMMER
Middlesbrough

IN BRIEF

August 1976, Apollo 17 took place almost four years earlier. Luna 24 returned a two-metre core of soil from Mare Crisium, a nearly circular basin towards the north-east edge of the visible face of the Moon. The core contained fragments of iron-rich but titanium-poor basalt, similar to some basalts returned by Apollo 17 and to several lunar meteorites. ROBERT HUTCHISON
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

Sir: Before teachers can be paid in proportion to their

pupils' results, thought must be given to the conduct of examinations. Teachers marking coursework which contributes to their pupils' results will have direct control over one indicator of their own pay.

In a politician that would be called conflict of interest. If performance-related pay has the incentive effects claimed, the likely result would be a marked improvement in exam results for which Tony Blair would instantly claim credit.

As a serving university teacher, I of course declare an interest in this letter. EARL RUSSELL
House of Lords

Internet investment advice from beyond the grave

BILL GATES, the infant prodigy of Microsoft and general info-guru, said the other day that it was crazy to invest in Internet firms, as they were desperately overvalued and it was all getting to be a kind of South Sea Bubble. Ever since then I have had a series of hysterically worried investors turning to me for comfort in case they have done the wrong thing and put their money in the wrong place, so it is high time that we devoted a column to all your letters, faxes, e-mail, phone calls and postcards on the subject.

I AM amazed that Bill Gates called this a South Sea Bubble situation. Why?

Because I had no idea that Bill Gates was so versed enough in history to have heard of the South Sea Bubble.

I don't think he is. I think what happened is that as Bill Gates continued on his quest to buy up the reproduction rights to every known picture in the history of the world, he may have come upon some illustrations of the 18th-century stock-market scandal known as the South Sea Bubble, in which worthless shares in the Pacific territories reached tremendous prices before collapsing. He may well have inquired what it was. Someone may have told him that the South Sea Bubble was the Wall Street Crash of the 1700s. This may well have stuck in his mind.

I see. Actually, by a bit of a coincidence, I do have some shares in the South Sea Trading Company which have been passed down through my family since the early 18th century and have never been

sold, and I wonder whether they have any value now.

Have you brought them along to show us?

Yes, they're here. They're normally under glass in the library, but I got them out to show you... Gosh, they're jolly nice, aren't they? I can't remember when I saw something as nice as this on the 'Antique Stocks and Shares Road Show'. You're jolly lucky to have this. You can see the wonderful detail of the printing, here and here, and the fantastic decorative border, and the different splendid colours...

So how much are they worth, about, then?

Absolutely nothing, I'm afraid. Sorry. I wonder if you can help me. I am an investor who recently snapped

up shares in a new Internet company called Netophile, for which I paid £10 each. The company has not yet made anything or shown any profit. What return can I expect on my money?

Absolutely nothing, I'm afraid. You were a fool to buy.

I wonder if you can help me. A year ago I started a new Internet-based company called Netophile, which promised to download New Age sounds such as whales singing. Unfortunately, we haven't produced anything yet, nor shown any profit. I have recently been offered a vast sum of money for the company. Should I sell?

Yes. Sell now. You would be a fool not to sell.

Hold on, hold on. You think the buyer of such a firm is stupid to buy, but you advise the seller to sell to him? You advise one man to enrich himself by making another bankrupt: isn't that sick and immoral?

Yes. Sell now. You would be a fool not to sell.

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Hold on, hold on. You think the buyer of such a firm is stupid to buy, but you advise the seller to sell to him? You advise one man to enrich himself by making another bankrupt: isn't that sick and immoral?

Yes, it is sick and immoral. It's called advanced capitalism. And the next?

I am in charge of a small lobby group which puts the case for the Net Book Agreement, which governs the price of books. We are a small part-time organisation, open Wednesdays and Fridays, and Saturdays too, if Mrs Whittaker can come in then. Well, recently we got an offer of £2m as a takeover bid for the whole set-up, which is rather over the top if you ask me, even if you take into account the desirable address (quite near Hampstead), and I think what must have happened is that somebody thinks we are something to do with the Net and has got quite excited. What would you do?

Wait till Mrs Whittaker is out of the room and sell. Next!

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Hang fire on euro

Sir: Donald MacIntyre (Comment, 1 February) argues that the Chancellor and the Prime Minister should "ratchet up" their commitment to the euro and state "the Government's firm intention to join." Mr MacIntyre and other commentators feel it is necessary for the Government to go beyond the policy on which it was elected, which was further clarified by Gordon Brown with the five economic tests for entry. The policy remains both plausible and robust.

The last year has seen global financial crises, and there are indications that they may not be over yet. The euro is only one month old, and while many of us are confident that it will be a success and survive any future crises, I am not convinced that it would be wise or in the interests of the UK economy to indicate that we should unreservedly join, or give a date for joining.

The euro has no track record. To announce at this stage that we should join, before the date for a referendum has been set, or give a date for joining would be folly.

What we need is an informed debate, with those of us who are almost certain to be in the "yes" camp arguing the case for the euro and taking it to the country, not to the Prime Minister or the Chancellor.

The public must make up its own mind eventually at a referendum. In the meantime ministers can prepare, and need only make a decision once the economic tests have been satisfied.

There is curiosity among my non-UK Socialist colleagues here in Brussels about the possible timing of UK entry, but I don't detect the impatience that I see in both the europhile and euroceptic press in the UK.

MARK HENDRICK MEP
(Lancashire Central, Lab)
Spokesperson on Economic and Monetary Affairs for the Parliamentary Group of the Party of European Socialists
Brussels

Save this duck

Sir: The working party on the introduced ruddy duck, whose advice Environment Minister Michael Meacher has accepted, are not thinking clearly ("Ruddies to be shot for mating with wrong ducks", 2 February). They advocate exterminating this duck in Britain as a way of protecting the white-headed duck in Spain. But if male ruddy duck interbreed with female white-headed duck and produce fertile young, surely they are one species, and all that would be at risk is the genetic purity of a sub-species - perhaps not such a big deal.

And if the ruddy duck genes provide a more robust cross in the Spanish environment than unadulterated white-headed ducks, that will assist the species to flourish in Spain. If, on the other hand, the ruddy duck genes are disadvantageous to the species, they will hardly persist in the population. CHRIS SMOUT
Anstruther, Fife

Going to earth

Sir: Paul Latham of the Countryside Alliance (letter, 1 February) says artificial earths are not constructed for the purpose of breeding foxes. I shall allow his peers to persuade him otherwise.

The late Duke of Beaufort, a former president of Mr Latham's organisation, stated in 1980 that artificial earths are built "to provide somewhere for local foxes to have their cubs: in other words for breeding purposes". A H B Hart, Secretary of the Masters of Fox Hounds Association, said in 1987 that they are constructed "to provide suitable places for foxes to breed". Of course, we also have Shooting Gazette in 1993, stated that they are "used primarily as breeding chambers".

Officials of the Countryside Alliance really must make more of an effort to remain "on message". BEN STEWART
League Against Cruel Sports
London SE1

PANDORA

Which national newspaper...

→ Is the Plain English Campaign National Newspaper of the Year?
→ Has the full text of its investigation into Geoffrey Robertson's libel defence?

THE EXPRESS
FULL SPEED AHEAD

THE ADVERTISEMENT for The Express on the back cover of the current issue of Private Eye makes a range of proud boasts (see above). While Pandora supports the Plain English Campaign, she was surprised to see the mispunctuation of the word "it's" and the misspelt Geoffrey. "It was a hideous typographical error," says the Express deputy editor, Chris Blackhurst, "but it certainly wasn't at this end." While senior executives rush full speed ahead to find the culprit, Blackhurst admits: "Unfortunately, mistakes do happen."

SIR PAUL McCartney has given permission for a biography of the late Linda McCartney to be published in November in Britain by Little, Brown, Danny Field is the man who will pen the work. He met the then Linda Eastman in 1966 while she was in New York photographing the Rolling Stones. Sir Paul has not yet agreed to be interviewed for the book. "It was never a precondition that I had to show it to him before it's done. And I don't think there will be a need to show it to him," says Field. Besides, after all the fuss the former Beatle made about radio stations banning Linda's last song, "The Light Comes From Within", censorship would surely be the last thing on Macca's mind.

THERE WAS a distinct smell of New Labour in the air at the 10th anniversary dinner for the One World Action charity on Tuesday night. The charity, which has influenced Labour's international policy, attracted among others, Richard Attenborough, Cherie Blair (pictured), Ben Elton, Ben Kingsley, Glensy and Neil Kinnock. Kathy Lette and Geoffrey Robertson QC. A speech from the founder member Sir Signum Sternberg raised Pandora's eyebrows when he lamented that so many important issues are "reduced to the size of a soundbite". Surely,

New Labour were the architects of this method? Never mind. He made it up to the Blair by wishing them "happily established in Number 10 long after they qualify for their bus passes!" A blushing Cherie told Pandora: "I think that would be very fitting."

URI GELLER is in good spirits this week. The last time he hit the headlines was when the former England coach, Glenn Hoddle, publicly denied that he and the faith healer Eileen Drewery had visited the Israeli spoon-bender's home last summer. "He sat in my living-room, with my wife and children, and then denied it," Uri told Pandora. "It was terrible for my son, who then was teased at school because the other children thought that he had been lying." While Geller would not speculate on who he thought should take over from Hoddle, he was happy to discuss a book, *Uri Geller, Magician or Mystic*, penned by journalist Jonathan Margolis. The Chinese rights have just been sold. "I have never been to China, but I'm looking forward to going," he said. But what will he bend if he gets interviewed there? A wooden chopstick?

THE CHESTERFIELD hotel in Mayfair has just introduced five themed bedrooms. One is dedicated to the symphony orchestra; another has a jungle theme, presumably for those who enjoy a little rumble in the jungle; but Pandora's favourite is the one dedicated to the theatre, which has a piece of fabric over the bed which was once part of the curtain of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Couples will be invited to bring the curtain down on their own performances.

PANDORA HAS heard of people not being allowed into trendy clubs and bars because they are wearing trainers, or even suits. But on Tuesday night at Marco Pierre White's Titanic restaurant in London, a pretty young thing was refused entry because she was eating some chocolate. "You can't go in there eating that," said the clipboard Nazi. "Marco doesn't like that kind of thing."

Pandora can be contacted by e-mail: pandora@independent.co.uk

Why do we allow this grisly mutilation?



YASMIN

ALIBHAI-BROWN
When women and girls are being physically brutalised, then cultural differences be damned

possible with a partner who had been genitally disfigured.

Yet female circumcision goes on here in Britain and in France, and the authorities choose to turn a blind eye because it is easier to do this than to get embroiled in battles over cultural rights and racism. Television investigations have revealed that a couple of Harley Street doctors have been involved in the busi-

ness, but more frequently the circumcision is carried out on girls by taking them home when they are too young to understand or protest.

I will now describe what the worst kind of mutilation entails, and I apologise if it causes distress. I was shown what happens to the genital area by Khatoon, one of my former students, who is now studying at a new university. Where the inner labia and clitoris should be, was flat, scarred, barren, tight, tortured skin. Khatoon sobbed as she told me how her mother and grandmother held her down, singing her favourite songs, while two other women cut off the parts.

"They tied up the hole with sharp sticks and thread. They left a small space for the blood of the woman for later on and I was left on the bed with fever for so many weeks. Going to the toilet was like hell."

Intercourse is impossible, so the vagina has to be cut open on the wedding night. A razor blade is used by the husband. Childbirth causes untold suffering and complications, and some doctors I once talked to at the London Hospital wanted to publicise this grisly

information to try to affect the attitudes of the people concerned. It is all to do with the fear of female sexuality and pleasure.

The novelist Alice Walker and the British film-maker Prithvi Parmar have been campaigning for years to end this cruelty, which has tribal origins and pre-dates Christianity and Islam. These days, though, it is wrongly thought of as an Islamic custom because Islam is the main religion of the countries where female mutilation is commonly found. Islam, as a matter of fact, emphasises the right of sexual satisfaction for women within marriage, and I have yet to find a mutilated woman who says she has a good time in bed.

The good news is that yesterday a major trial began in France, where a woman from Mali, 52-year-old Hawa Greou, stands accused of the genital mutilation of 48 young girls. The parents of the girls have also been charged. Although, technically, genital mutilation has been against the law for 15 years in France, this is the first time that a case has been triggered by a victim's complaint and it is the first time, too, that a female judge is presiding.

The young woman who went to the police is now a law student. Women like her have the means to change things. Education, especially Western education, makes you question your own people, for better or worse, and learn about fundamental freedoms and rights. In Kenya recently such women have persuaded some village chiefs to organise circumcision ceremonies, but in purely symbolic ways, and this is beginning the slow road to reform. Donor countries providing aid could impose tighter conditions on this issue. The problem in Britain is that there is a fear of interfering with "ethnic" cultures, and a reluctance to impose norms.

In general this delicacy is no bad thing, as it shows a greater respect for pluralism than our culturally more arrogant French cousins. But when women and girls are being physically and emotionally brutalised, denied the right of education and treated like objects, then cultural difference be damned, I say to the people in power.

Follow France. Do what is necessary, and what you would if these girls were white.

Beware the wild rovers of Limerick and Lewisham



JOHN

WALSH
Who are these guys, the street-haired wild bunch whose womenfolk are tougher than the men?

others were enjoying "an old-fashioned Irish sing-song", but softly, just softly. One of the party, Miles Connor, en route to the lavatory, was told by a black passenger: "Shut your women up, shut your lady up." Connor had replied that the girls were only enjoying themselves. The Jamaican threw a glass of beer over Connor and, when another traveller got up to remonstrate, told both men that he'd slaughter them, once they hit Jamaica. The cabin staff tried their "normal calming techniques" and, half-an-hour later, the Irish were told that the aircraft was being diverted to Virginia, where they were left stranded for two days, as their luggage went on to Montego Bay without them.

The more we learnt about them, the more vivid they became. They were mostly members of an extended family called Connor. Many of them lived on a caravan site in a Lewisham car park, at the seriously nasty end of South London. Four of the six women are sisters - Elizabeth, Angela, Katrina and Priscilla O'Driscoll. Their family made its

money by paving gardens and driveways, and could afford to run a £30,000 Toyota Landcruiser, as well as a less glamorous pick-up truck.

The men were allergic to having their photographs taken. And some of them seemed dangerous to property, according to the proprietor of the caravan site's local pub, the Royal Oak, from which members of the clan had been banned since June last year for allegedly ripping out the loos, dismembering the telephones and getting into fights.

Who are these guys - this street-haired wild bunch whose womenfolk are tougher than the men, where drinking, fighting and destroying property count as normal behaviour? Just as Alan Clark looked at the English football hooligans marauding through the streets of Marseilles last year and saw the British martial spirit asserting itself against the old enemy, so one can look at the Twelve as a newish phenomenon: the combination of the Irish tinker and the south London desperado, forming a mongrel strain that's stronger and more uncompromising than either. Tinkers are the guilty secret of modern Ireland. Though the press and more enlightened sectors of the community call them "itinerants" or "the travelling community", it's by the name "tinkers" or "knackers" that the Republic's 22,000 wanderers are more usually known to Irish people. Once considered a picturesque addition to the Irish landscape, with their shawls and hennaed hair, their tin cans and old Gypsy caravans, they became increasingly marginalised figures in post-war Ireland.

On the outskirts of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway, in the Seventies, you could always see a line of rusting mobile homes on the grass verge, with a couple of horses, some phenomenally dirty children playing



Elizabeth O'Driscoll, furious at being thrown off a plane PA

hall - and a local housewife scrubbing her front path with Jeyes Fluid, for fear the children might cross it. They were the apotheosis of the wandering Gypsy rover (though they hate being called Gypsies) but they were capable of spectacular violence. It came with the culture. At a tinker funeral in Ballymore, Co Sligo, in March last year, warring traveller families turned up with shotguns, slash-hooks, machetes, bayonets and hurley sticks in the boot of their cars, and police avoided a bloodbath only by confiscating 200 weapons. A Fine Gael county councillor called John Flannery called the travelling community "dogs" and suggested that they should be branded or fitted with tags.

The travellers call in vain for anti-racist legislation; they ask to be granted a separate ethnic identity and allowed to live in peace with the settled community. In the meantime they're vilified as violent trouble-makers and endlessly blanketed from the national consciousness, or

moved on. No wonder they should wish to head for England, where the worst that can happen is that they'll be identified by the American phrase "trailer trash". This is the strain from which the Norfolk Twelve appear to have come: a culture of drink, poverty, inbreeding, ill-health and the expectation of violence. In Lewisham and Croydon - the homes of the Connors, O'Driscolls, Coopers, Coles and the rest of the tribe - they have made a better life for themselves, once, certainly to pay for what a tabloid jealously called a "winter sunshine trip".

They may live outside the normal forms of society, outside the community of mortgage-payers and one jump ahead of the Inland Revenue, but their experience of the south London air has evidently made them stronger, richer and more vibrant with attitude than the majority of their metropolitan neighbours. Just remember not to stick around when they start singing.

Speaking up for stubborn England



PODIUM

VERNON BOGDANOR
From the David Hume Lecture delivered in Edinburgh by the professor of politics at Oxford University

DEVOLUTION WILL radically alter the role of Westminster, by introducing the spirit of federalism into its deliberations. Hitherto, this spirit has been absent from Westminster, with the de minimis exception of Northern Ireland between 1921 and 1972. With this exception, there has been no element of federalism in a House of Commons in which every MP was responsible for scrutinising both the domestic and the non-domestic affairs of every part of the UK.

After devolution, by contrast, MPs will normally play no role at all at Westminster in legislating for the domestic affairs of Northern Ireland or Scotland, or in scrutinising secondary legislation for Wales. Only with respect to England will MPs continue to enjoy the power which, until now, they have enjoyed for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Thus Westminster, from being a parliament for both the domestic and non-domestic affairs of the whole of the UK, will be transformed into a parliament for England, a primary legislation parliament for Wales and a federal par-

liament for Northern Ireland and Scotland.

This kind of asymmetrical federalism is sometimes thought of as anomalous. It would be wrong, it is sometimes suggested, for Scottish MPs, after devolution, to be able to vote on English domestic affairs, when English MPs will no longer be able to vote on Scottish domestic affairs. This, of course, is the notorious West Lothian question. I have to confess that I have never been able to appreciate the force of this question. For English MPs have never shown much interest in Scottish domestic affairs. Even under the pre-devolution arrangements, Scottish legislation remained largely the concern of Scottish MPs.

What the West Lothian question does do, however, is to draw attention to the fact that devolution is turning Britain from a unitary state into a quasi-federal state, with Westminster becoming the quasi-federal parliament of that quasi-federal state.

The prime reason why the new constitution is asymmetrical is that the devolution legislation does not propose any

alteration in the arrangements by which England is governed. There may, at first sight, seem to be no reason why devolution to Scotland and Wales should have any consequences for England at all. Devolution, after all, involves the transfer of power only over Scottish and Welsh domestic matters, and the legislation provides that the central instruments of economic management, to-

gether with all major economic and industrial powers, remain with Westminster. Moreover, the Government will continue to be responsible for the nationwide allocation of resources on the basis of need. Devolution, then, appears restricted to those matters that primarily affect those living in Scotland and Wales and which can be administered separately.

Devolution, however, will accentuate an already existing constitutional imbalance in favour of Scotland and Wales. They already have their own secretaries of state; they are over-represented in the House of Commons; and there is a good case for arguing that Scotland, although not Wales, benefits more from public spending than those English regions whose GDP per head is lower. After devolution, Scotland and Wales will have control over local government spending on devolved services and very possibly a greater opportunity of putting their case directly to the European Union.

In his poem "The Secret People" GK Chesterton wrote: "Smile at us, pay us, pass us,

but do not quite forget: for we are the people of England that have never spoken yet." England has not yet spoken because, constitutionally, England does not exist. There has been no English Parliament since 1536. There is no English Office comparable to the Scottish, Welsh or Northern Ireland offices, the "English" ministers being so only because their non-English functions have been hived off.

England has long been the stumbling-block for supporters of devolution. For England, since the time of the Union with Scotland in 1707, has resisted integration, while remaining unsympathetic to federalism. It is the supposedly unified and homogeneous nature of England which has, in large part, been responsible for that preservation of the unitary state.

There can, indeed, be no justification for requiring England to accept devolution against her wishes just because there has been devolution to Scotland and Wales. To force devolution upon England, far from assuaging resentment against Scotland and Wales, could well intensify it.

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One hundred days of farce



IMRE KARACS
Their performance is certainly no way to run a government, but full marks for entertainment

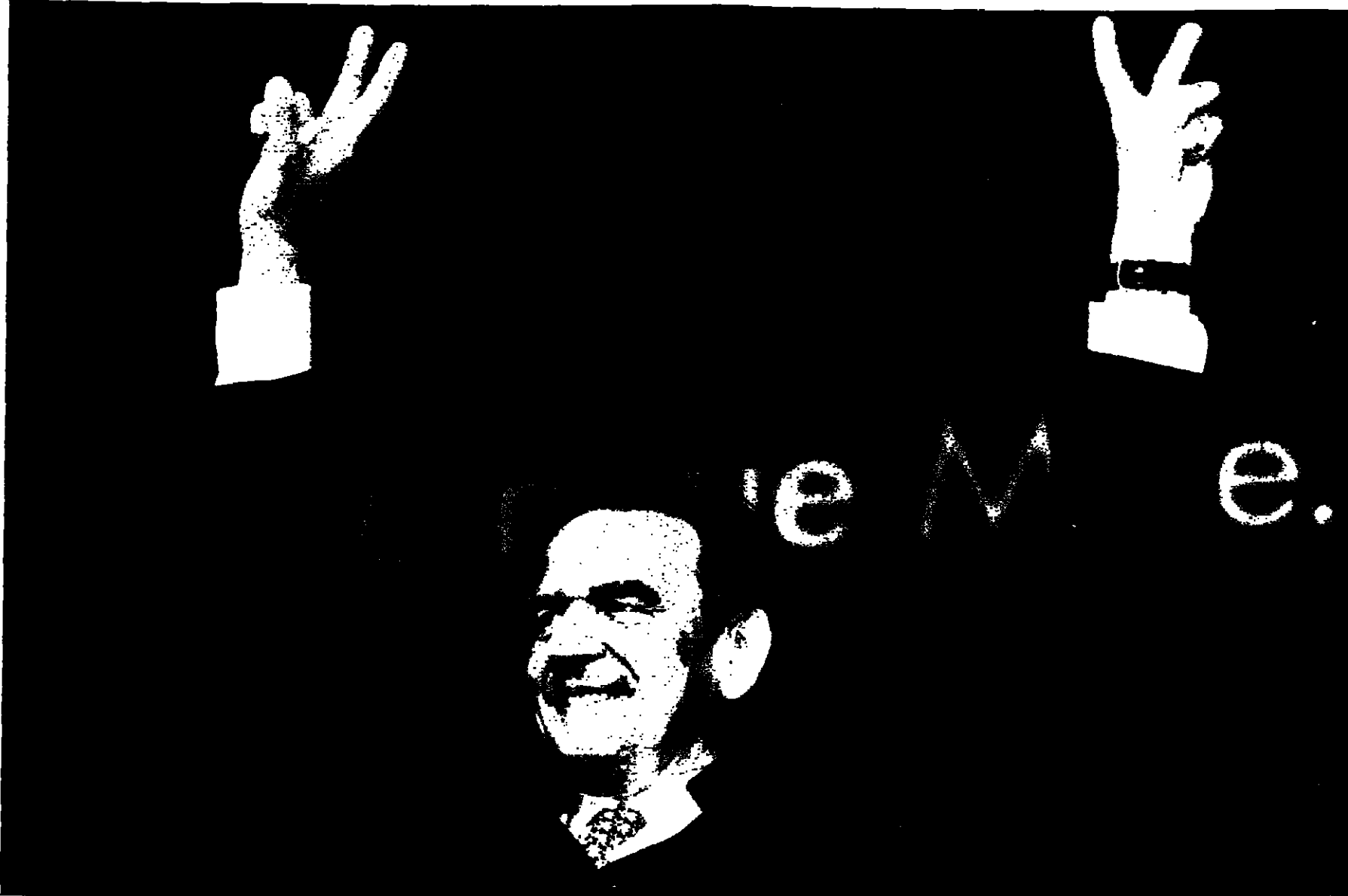
FOR YEARS, Bonn's press corps, bored rigid like the rest of Germany, would muse about the possibilities of life after Helmut Kohl. "Imagine a Red-Green government," some funny man would say, "led by Schröder, and including Lafontaine and Joschka Fischer. Ha-ha."

Well, a hundred days have elapsed since this unlikely troika stepped into the reins, and we are still laughing. It would be unkind to suggest that we were privileged to witness a cock-up on every one of those days. This is, after all, Germany, where not even politicians work at weekends. But those autumn weeks when tax thresholds and ceilings were constantly Yo-Yo-ing up and down are unforgettable. The now-we-shut-them-now-we-don't discussion about the fate of nuclear power plants will remain for ever etched on our memory. And long may Oskar Lafontaine's self-destructive maraudings through Europe be remembered!

Perhaps it was unfair to expect some basic measure of competence from a party, the Social Democrats, that had been watching Mr Kohl from the sidelines for 16 years. And maybe their partners, the Greens, were entitled to a period of grace in which to lose their innocence. But it had always been said of the German political system that its federalist structure prevented greenhorns from reaching the summit in too indecent a haste.

Gerhard Schröder had two terms as Prime Minister of Lower Saxony – the first in the company of the Greens – "to learn the ropes of government". Mr Lafontaine had been running the, admittedly pipsqueak, region of Saarland longer than anyone can remember. The Greens had also served in *Land* governments. Yet the misanthrope that landed closest to the target in this week's remorseless shower of opprobrium was the word "dilettante".

That is not to say they have achieved nothing. Within days of taking over, the new government reversed the only two reforms that the Kohl administration had managed to push through in its twilight term. Back went sick pay and child benefits to their original level, just as Mr Schröder had promised to the electorate. Social justice was deemed to have been restored.



Gerhard Schröder celebrates his election victory last year. He would subsequently be accused of 'style over substance'

The other side of the economic equation – creating conditions in which businesses can prosper – will be taken care of by Mr Lafontaine. Or so we are told. Judging by the diligence with which the Finance Minister is pointing the finger at others – evil banks that set interest rates at a whopping 3 per cent, unfairly low taxes in other European countries – Mr Lafontaine is already convinced that his methods will fail.

But wait, there is the "Jobs Pack", an arrangement involving the unions and employers. The idea is that they all get together around Chancellor Schröder's kitchen table, and thrash out a deal on wage rises, overtime and staffing levels, sweetened with a little tax break here and there. Everyone goes home happy, unemployment falls, the government gets re-elected.

It could work. This is the way Germany has been run since the war, and the country has not done all that badly. If anyone can pull it off, it is Chancellor Schröder: friend of big business, superb deal-maker, an expert at smoothing over ruffled feathers, or knocking heads together when that's required. But surely this will not bring unemployment down by 1 million, a target Mr Lafontaine had set his government in an unguarded moment. For that would also need a comprehensive reform of the welfare state, making German labour affordable again. No such plan exists in Mr Lafontaine's drawer.

This could be another example of "style over substance", a charge levelled against Mr Schröder with monotonous regularity. It is "stylish", for instance, when the cabinet assemblies in Berlin, as it did yesterday. There is no strong reason for it, except that it looks good, marking the Chancellor out as a man who cannot wait for the dawn of the "Berlin Republic". The move from Bonn to Berlin, due to take place after the summer, is Mr Schröder's Millennium Dome: potent symbol of his modernity, an official decree that henceforth all must have fun. "Berlin" in his vocabulary stands for youth, urbanity, raw energy and tolerance. In other words the very antithesis of the old order hallmarked by the geriatric ward of Bonn.

Surprisingly though, behind this stylistic edifice lurks a great deal of substance. Before Bonn empties in the summer, the Bundestag is set

to consign to the dustbin of history the 1913 nationality law designed for Aryans. Up to 4 million "foreigners" will get German citizenship and the many rights that come with it. The myth of the homogeneous German nation will be broken; Germans will be confronted with the multiculturalism of their society. If the Schröder government were to do nothing else, this reform alone would be a huge achievement.

But there will be others. Regardless of all the Red-Green dings, the government of Europe's richest country has taken a big stride towards closing its nuclear power plants. The phase-out will proceed at a snail's pace, and there will always be a possibility that the next government will reverse everything. But the consensus against nuclear power is hardening, and German governments do not swim against the tide. One distant day, Germany's Greens may be able to point to this period as their finest; the moment when the global nuclear economy began to unravel.

There is also a chance, however remote, of a breakthrough on the foreign front. Mr Schröder cares little about Europe, and spends

few sleepless nights worrying about the pace of EU expansion. He approaches the negotiating table without adopting the humble posture of his predecessors. But his business-like manner may be exactly what the squabbling band of European leaders needs at this moment. Mr Schröder is demanding a cut in Germany's patently unfair contributions. He will settle for considerably less than what he appears to be holding out for in exchange for the long-awaited reform of the EU budget. And he wants all this completed by March, half-way through the German presidency of the EU.

But striking deals in Europe is child's play in comparison with the task of reaching a decision in the German cabinet. Since day one, the question of who runs Germany has remained pertinent. Mr Lafontaine, Finance Minister and Chairman of the Social Democratic party, thinks he does. Joschka Fischer, leader of the Greens and Foreign Minister, believes he is in charge of foreign policy – except the European bits which Mr Lafontaine has stolen. To complicate matters, Jürgen Trittin, the Green Environment Minister, labours under the illusion that he is

responsible for nuclear power.

The person who really runs Germany is Bodo Hombach, the Chancellor's trusted troubleshooter, "New Centre" – aka "Third Way" – ideologue, and spin-meister. With Mr Hombach's help, the Chancellor has won every important policy clash so far. These days Mr Lafontaine only whispers about European tax harmonisation into his pillow. Mr Fischer's talk about a "United States of Europe" is scaling new heights of abstraction. And the other day Mr Trittin proudly proclaimed his humiliation over nuclear reprocessing as a triumph.

As long as everyone understands his respective role, things will run smoothly. Despite all the U-turns, many Germans think the government is doing a good job. In the polls, both the Social Democrats and the Greens have moved slightly above their election result.

The trouble is, each of the big players has an audience of his own to satisfy, and sometimes they overact. Their collective performance is certainly not the best way to run the government, but full marks for entertainment value. Guaranteed to make you weep.

RIGHT OF REPLY

JACK ASHLEY



The peer and disabled rights campaigner responds to a leading article on Glenn Hoddle

GLENN HODDLE'S admission of serious error of judgement was overdue, but his dismissal had less to do with that than with the aggressive media campaign it provoked. Never was so much righteous indignation expressed on behalf of disabled people.

The end of Hoddle should be the beginning of a re-assessment of our tolerance. The concerted attack on him was because he was thought to have committed the cardinal sin of offending disabled people. Had this always been the prevailing attitude, the lives of disabled people would have been immeasurably enriched. But offending disabled people has been one of the most persistent and despicable aspects of our history.

Although they are no longer put to death, as in early days, disabled people have not exactly been reclaimed in the last few hundred years. Patronising them, disregarding their problems and generally ignoring them has been the norm. Now, suddenly, because of Hoddle's outburst, they are inviolable and he was forced out – despite the practical help he had given them.

The media campaign against Hoddle, based – apparently – on the sense of outrage on disabled people, was astonishing in its intensity. Many of those who jumped on the bandwagon had never given a thought to disability, but they apparently became distraught at hearing Hoddle express his religious views.

But where, in all this, are our values regarding the individual and our tolerance of their behaviour? If, as we claim, we believe in the freedom of speech, that freedom is of little value if it is confined to the expression of popular views. The real test is how we react when people express unpopular opinions – such as those articulated by Glenn Hoddle.

Topless darts, clueless television

LIVE TV is "available" in more than 2.5 million homes, according to the cable station. But it is available in the same sense that staring at the wheels going around on your electricity meter is available as a leisure pursuit. Chris Horrie's and Adam Nathan's book makes it clear that, for entertainment value, the meter probably wins out over Live.

With the departure of David Montgomery from Mirror Group, Live TV's backers, the main protagonists in the station's story have gone. Kelvin MacKenzie to Talk Radio and Janet Street-Porter to her own production company, while Montgomery, presumably, is looking for a new company to display his cost-cutting skills.

It might, then, be asked: why write a book about a little-watched cable channel notorious more for its stunts



THURSDAY BOOK

LIVE TV: TELLYBRATS AND TOPLESS DARTS
BY CHRIS HORRIE AND ADAM NATHAN.
SIMON & SCHUSTER, £18.99

and poorly paid staff than for its impact on British viewers? Yet this is much more than the story of trampolining dwarfs and Norwegian babes presenting the weather. By tracing the careers of the three main players, the authors attempt to tell the tale of British television over the last 20 years – the way Horrie did with tabloid newspapers in *Stick it Up Your Punter*, his earlier book on The Sun. Horrie picks up where he left off there, his argument being that many

of the same characters who ruined British popular newspapers have been allowed to do likewise to British television. The book identifies a point in the early Eighties when many influential television types seemed to grasp the concept of "selling the sizzle, not the sausage" – in other words, style over substance. It identifies Street-Porter as one of many beneficiaries of this move to content-free programming, charting her career back to her much-mimicked "yoof" programmes, *Network 7* and *Def II*.

The book wickily explains what Live TV is for and why it is as bad as it is. Horrie and Nathan make it plain that it was never really about viewers. Created because of the cable industry's need to compete with Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB, the channel was to be funded not primarily by advertising or viewers' subscriptions; instead, Mirror Group was to get 25p for every subscriber who signed up to a cable TV package, as a kind of payment for its newspapers to promote cable in the way The Sun supports Sky.

However, things went wrong when a major cable company, which was supposed to join a consortium to bid against Sky for sports rights, decided instead to sign a deal to work with Sky. Immediately the likelihood of millions signing up for cable disappeared. And so did the rationale for Live TV. It has never really had one since.

The book rattles along, rendering the complex world of international television deals with a sardonic and humorous eye, but it becomes really funny when the channel gets on air:



Norwegian weather girls were one of the stunts that typified Live TV

The original Live TV was Britain's first completely vacuous television channel. No one had any idea how to fill the air time, except that it had to be "trendy" and "happening" and appeal to "yoof". But even that rather limited brief could not be fulfilled with the tiny budget.

The channel had few experienced personnel. Instead, young, good-looking wannabe stars – christened "tellybrats" – were signed. The technology meant to give the station 24 hours of live output from parties and clubs never really worked. Endlessly repeated vox pops and micro-celebrities filled the airwaves. Crews of inexperienced youngsters were sent into London's West End to get into parties. They were often turned away but could not have transmitted anyway because the outside-broadcast trucks were the wrong kind.

Presenters were reduced to filming themselves going shopping or doing the washing-up. Bad ad-hopping and strange sex games which either did not work or (when they did) broke television regulations were stretched out to fill the hours. The few guests the

channel could attract were self-publicising weirdos who would have made Jerry Springer wince. It was supposed to be *Hello!* magazine on acid, but it wasn't even that good.

After five months MacKenzie, originally supposed to oversee Mirror Group's sports TV business, asserted his power and Street-Porter walked out. MacKenzie created the channel that is now famous – famous, but still rubbish. Stunts such as the News Bunny, the Norwegian weather presenters and topless darts gave the channel great name-recognition – but still few viewers.

Horrie's previous book on *The Sun* was more entertaining, partly because – despite Live's message about the future direction of TV – it is still nothing like as culturally important as MacKenzie's *Sun*. And not quite as funny. The funniest anecdotes in this book are still those about the glory days of tabloid excess. But Live TV comes close – as close, we should hope, as British television will ever come to being truly tabloid.

PAUL MCCANN

THURSDAY POEM

THE COMET
(BLASCHETTE, APRIL 6, 1997)
BY DUNCAN BUSH

This week's high pressure brings high April sky
and dawn frosts, with our neighbour's
cherry orchard epithalamial with flower.

At night he fights votive paraffin smudge-pots
while I stand outside to see Hale-Bopp,
its misty tail of ice-particles and gases

like a distant, single, backward-shining foglightbeam.
Is looking at the night sky so long
a form of thanks or prayer? Entering my second

quinquagenary today, I stay out till
the lit room's bleak, the TV dim, to nightvision
after the intensity of starlight stared at years away.

Duncan Bush's new collection, 'Midway', is published at £7.95 by
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Robin Nedwell

AS DUNCAN Waring, one of the boozing and womanising medical students in the television situation comedy *Doctor in the House*, Robin Nedwell was catapulted to fame. He went on to play the doctor at war with the establishment in four sequels, as well as a stage play. For 20 years, he was also seen regularly as the star of other television comedies and he is remembered by his friends for his laugh and a natural talent for comedy.

Born in Birmingham in 1946, Nedwell moved with his family at an early age to Cardiff and, at school, was encouraged to become an actor. He joined the Welsh Theatre Company, before training at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London, and gaining repertory theatre experience in Birmingham, Liverpool, Cheltenham, Bristol, Cardiff and Sheffield.

Nedwell's became a well-known face almost overnight when he was cast in *Doctor in the House* (1969), alongside other medical students played by Barry Evans, George Layton, Martin Shaw, Simon Cuff and Geoffrey Davies, all trying the patience of Professor Loftus (Ernest Clark). The TV sitcom was launched after LWT's then head of comedy, Frank Muir, acquired the rights to adapt Richard Gordon's "Doctor" books, which had already been brought to the screen in feature films from the mid-fifties onwards.

The television series, with new staff and students, set at St Swinburn's teaching hospital, featured scripts by writers such as John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Graeme Garden, Bill Oddie and Barry Cryer. Although Nedwell did not appear in the sequel, *Doctor at Large*, he returned as Waring - now a senior houseman - in 42 episodes of *Doctor in Charge* (1972), with Sammie Wainwright playing his girlfriend, Nurse Sandra Crumpton, and Victor Platt and Mollie Sugden as his parents.

Nedwell and Geoffrey Davies were next seen in *Doctor at Sea* (1974), aboard a cruise liner; the *Begonia*, with Ernest Clark now playing Professor Loftus's brother, Captain Lof-

tus. The team of writers for both of these series included Phil Redmond, who was later to create *Grange Hill* and *Brookside*. Nedwell and Davies were again the stars when Australian television revived the series as *Doctor Down Under* in 1980. The BBC sought a further revival with *Doctor at the Top* (1991), featuring Nedwell as an NHS consultant paediatrician at St Swinburn's, now married with five children, as well as George Layton and Geoffrey Davies, but this ran for only seven episodes. Never has one situation comedy

Doctor in the House became Doctor at Large, then Doctor in Charge. Never has one sitcom appeared in so many guises

appeared in so many guises. But typecasting proved not to be a problem and Nedwell found himself in demand for starring roles in other comedies. After his first appearance in *Doctor in the House*, he acted Roland, best friend of Geoffrey (Richard Beckinsale), in the writer Jack Rosenthal's warmly remembered series *The Lovers* (1970-71). He played Mike Upchat in *The Upchat Connection* (1978), Keith Waterhouse's sequel to *The Upchat Line*, which had starred John Alderton as an author known more for his chat-up lines than for his literary success. In the new series, Alderton's Upchat had ruffled the key of his luggage locker at Marylebone station, London, and bequeathed his name and his address book to the winner, Nedwell.

Another series written by Water-



Nedwell as Duncan Waring, the role that made his name in 1969

house, *West End Tales* (1981), starred Nedwell as Fiddler, who immersed himself in Soho life with his friends the Bishop (Garfield Morgan) and Checkie (Larry Martin), gathered at Ma's Cafe, with Toni Palmer playing Ma. Hot on its heels, Nedwell played a pop musician, Peter Higgins, giving new life to a village brass band, in *Shillingbury Tales* (1981), a series that evolved out of Francis Essex's play *The Shillingbury Blowers* (1980).

When the six-part series began, Peter Higgins was married to Sally (Diane Keen), daughter of Major Langton (Lionel Jeffries). Nedwell's next starring role on television was as Harry Lumsdon, a bakery worker with a newly discovered IQ of 166, in *The Climber* (1983), a series written by Alex Shearer.

Although he also played Mercu-

lio in *Romeo and Juliet* and Reverend Green in *Cluedo* on the small screen, most of Nedwell's subsequent career was spent in the theatre. As well as touring Australia in *Doctor in the House* (1974) and *Doctor in Love* (1977), he appeared on stage with the Royal Shakespeare Company in *The Devil is an Ass*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Richard III* (all 1985-86), and in the West End in *Brigadoon* (Victoria Palace, 1989).

He played Max Deitelman in a British tour of *The Sound of Music*, a production that was also staged at Sadler's Wells (1992). Nedwell proved his versatility on screen by acting in Roman Polanski's film of *Macbeth* (1971), working mostly on the sword-fight sequences in this particularly violent and bloodthirsty version of the Shakespearean

tragedy. Fencing was a hobby of his and he taught it at drama schools.

Nedwell was also seen in the film *Stand Up Virgin Soldiers* (1977), a sequel to the original big-screen version of Leslie Thomas's best-selling novel about British army recruits in Singapore, and the spoof television film *The Zany Adventures of Robin Hood* (1983), starring George Segal. At the time of his death, Nedwell had been due to appear in a forthcoming BBC children's comedy-drama, as yet untitled. He was a dedicated follower of Llanelli rugby club and collected Japanese swords and prints.

ANTHONY HAYWARD

Robin Nedwell, actor; born Birmingham 27 September 1946; married 1982 Heather Inglis (one daughter); died Hedge End, Hampshire 1 February 1999.

Bob Auger

IN THE modern recording industry the team divides into the producer, who deals with the performance, and the engineer, who deals with the microphone rig, the recording equipment and its operation, and the venue or studio. Bob Auger was one of the leading British recording engineers and a notable pioneer, both as a freelance, and for the practical application of successive technical developments, including stereo and digital recording. He leaves a distinguished portfolio of several thousand recordings, assessed by one colleague as "most of the interesting recordings from that period".

Auger's father was a sergeant-major in the Army, whose successive postings caused constant family upheavals. Auger was born in St John's Wood Barracks, in London, and lived in India as an infant, where he caught malaria, which resulted in his education being repeatedly interrupted. He left school at 14, and to please his father's ambition for him to have a job with a pension became a booking clerk at Stoke-on-Trent railway station, a career ended at Head Office, Euston, when at the age of 28 he left to take an apprenticeship at Bryanston Street Studios. From there he soon moved on to the Pye record company as an engineer.

As a child Auger had started collecting 78s, thus becoming, despite his lack of formal musical training, very knowledgeable of both music and recordings. His growing technical knowledge was reinforced by evening classes. He soon encountered the American record engineer Bob Fine, the architect of Mercury Records. Assisting Fine was an inspiring apprenticeship, and Auger's first recording with him was Barbirolli's recording of Vaughan Williams's *Eighth Symphony* in 1956. Barbirolli was the first big name Auger worked for and they struck up a warm friendship.

Mercury's reputation was built on their celebrated "single microphone" technique which claimed authentic reproduction of what was actually played, leaving the conductor to decide dynamics and balance. Auger became well known for developing the multi-microphone recording familiar to the modern industry.

Pye was an innovative company in both repertoire and technical developments, particularly of stereo, of which Auger became a notable pioneer. He made his name with a wider audience when working with the conductor Charles Mackerras. In April 1959 they recorded Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* using a very large wind ensemble, soon adding the *Sinfonietta* and opera preludes by Janáček.

From 1960 to 1962 Auger was the Chief Engineer of Granada TV in Manchester, subsequently returning to Pye as Technical Manager. He was the *raison d'être* for setting up Granada Recordings, which he ran from 1969 to 1974. During this time he supported the recording requirements of a wide range of leading companies, including RCA, CBS and Vanguard, and in 1974 became fully freelance. The RCA connection had begun prior to Granada, for RCA had contracted Pye to make recordings for them in the UK, and such was Auger's burgeoning reputation, the work followed him.

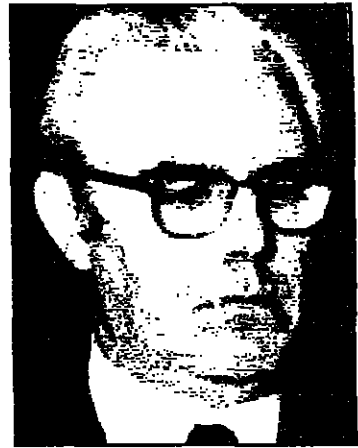
A pioneering client was John Goldsmith of the newly established Unicorn Records, for whom he made some 130 records. Their first was Nielsen's Fifth Symphony conducted by Jascha Horenstein. Here Auger's legendary inventiveness and unfappability became apparent when, having trouble getting the fade-down of the side-drum solo, he put Alf Dukes, the side-drum player, in the lobby and slowly closed the door on him while recording. On another occasion the gentleman's toilet was found a perfect acoustic for John the Baptist's cell in Richard Strauss's *Salome*. One of his best recordings for Unicorn is widely regarded as Horenstein's Mahler

Third, reputedly the first commercial multi-track Dolby A recording on one-inch tape. Later, a pioneer of digital recording, Gliere's expansive Third Symphony, was among the first such recordings by an independent company.

Possibly the company with whom Auger made most records was another independent label, CRD, for whom he covered a very wide spectrum of music including the debut recordings of Trevor Pinnock and the Chilingirian String Quartet.

Other artists included Pierre Boulez, the film composer and conductor Bernard Herrmann, Leopold Stokowski, the sopranos Beverly Sills and Cathy Berberian, the composer and pianist John McCabe with whom he made some 16 piano recordings, and Erich Leinsdorf with whom he recorded *Salome* for RCA. Perhaps above all was Leonard Bernstein, whose 1970 *Albini Hall Verdi Requiem*, with Plácido Domingo, Auger thought one of his major achievements, though he was very upset at the time that the issued recording was remixed after the tape left him.

Apart from specific recordings, Auger's overriding achievement was in demonstrating that an independent engineer could be viable, indeed could lead the field, so that major companies and the world's leading artists would seek to employ him. He worked, too, as sound engineer on a number of high-profile public occasions both in the pop and classical fields. These included as varied events as the 1969 Isle of Wight Pop Festival, the Rolling Stones in Hyde Park, Frank Sinatra's charity concert at the Festival Hall and Karlheinz Stockhausen's concert in the same hall in the mid-1970s, the latter with



Multi-microphone recordings

its extensive requirement for electronic sound, when the mixing desk was ostentatiously located in mid-stalls.

While working for Pye Auger was responsible for many pop sessions: artists with whom he had hits included Ray Davies and the Kinks ("You Really Got Me", 1964; "Sunny Afternoon", 1966), The Animals ("House of the Rising Sun", 1964) and Steve Winward and the Spencer Davis Group ("Keep on Running", 1966). He also recorded Duke Ellington, Sammy Davis Jr, Marlene Dietrich at her last appearance in London, Bing Crosby, and Buddy Rich at Ronny Scott's for RCA.

Invariably on location he easily adapted to local, often Spartan, conditions, in halls and churches not designed for recording. On several occasions he worked through the night to avoid daytime distractions. Remembering his own beginnings, he was always very kind to aspiring engineers and several protégés were helped into the profession by him. Although nominally retired, he was still working for Opera Rara, whose entire catalogue he had recorded, when he died unexpectedly in his sleep.

LEWIS FOREMAN

Robert Walter Ernest Auger, recording engineer; born London 30 April 1923; married 1964 Monika Belfuss (one son, one daughter); died Swansea 12 December 1998.

The Right Rev Patrick Casey

PATRICK CASEY, the former Roman Catholic Bishop of Brentwood, could never remember the time when he did not want to be a priest. During his 59 years in ministry he retained the heart of a gentle caring priest; he had a total lack of pomp and a self-deprecating, if mischievous, sense of humour.

Casey became a bishop just after the Second Vatican Council, and he brought to the diocese an approach of unassuming authority, very much in the style of the Council. His appointment as Bishop of Brentwood in November 1969 followed six years as the vicar general in the Archdiocese of Westminster and four years as auxiliary Bishop of Westminster.

He was one of the first Catholic bishops in England to be selected after consultation within the diocese. After the death of Casey's predecessor, the Brentwood priests conducted a survey in an attempt to formulate the qualities needed in a bishop. The results of the survey were fairly predictable - a pastoral, kindly and caring candidate was sought. There were, of course, many other qualities required - in fact, every virtue had to be included and



Canonised saint required

every vice excluded. The only qualifier, as Casey commented when he read it over breakfast, was a canonised saint! A few days later Rome announced his appointment to the vacant see.

Not many Brentwood priests knew much about their new bishop, but subtle - and otherwise - enquiries from the brethren across the diocesan boundaries soon elicited the information that Patrick Casey

was a much-loved and greatly appreciated man. Indeed of all the qualities for which Casey is remembered in the diocese by both clergy and lay people his kindness will be first. Any one who had to face any sort of crisis, trouble or difficulty would always have the bishop's compassion and assistance. His kindness was also practical, as many individuals, parishes, societies and organisations could testify.

On the day of his installation Casey announced that he would remain bishop of the diocese for 10 years. He meant what he said. In the autumn of 1979 he submitted his resignation to the Pope. This was recognised as an unprecedented but courageous decision. Casey stated: "I am confident that in the interests of the diocese, of priests and people alike, I should make way for a younger and more vigorous bishop to lead you forward."

Casey was born in 1913 in Stoke Newington, north London, and educated at St Joseph's Parochial School, Kingsland. He began his studies for the priesthood at the Westminster diocesan seminary at St Edmund's College, Ware, in Hert-

fordshire. In June 1939 he was ordained priest by Cardinal Hinsley.

Casey's first appointment was as Assistant Priest at St James's, Spanish Place, near Manchester Square in central London, where he stayed for over 20 years. In 1961 he became parish priest of Hendon. He was only there for two and a half years before being appointed Vicar General of the Westminster Archdiocese in 1963 by the then Archbishop, Cardinal Heenan. The following year he became a Domestic Prelate and a Canon of Westminster Cathedral. Casey had an excellent relationship with the priests of Westminster, among whom he was universally popular. He also had a great friendship with Heenan.

In 1966 Casey was consecrated bishop of the titular see of Sular by Cardinal Heenan, and became one of the auxiliary Bishops of Westminster. After three years he became Bishop of Brentwood, following the retirement of Bishop Bernard Wall. He maintained his close links with Westminster and it was as Bishop of Brentwood, one of the suffragan dioceses of the Westminster archdiocese, that Casey was the princi-

pal celebrant at the funeral of Cardinal Heenan in 1975.

But it was the pastor in him that dominated. After his resignation as bishop in 1979, Casey again became parish priest, this time at Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More in Chelsea. He retired 10 years later to Leigh-on-Sea in the diocese of Brentwood. It brought him great joy to live next door to the local church and continue to assist in parish life.

BRIAN O'SHEA

Patrick Joseph Casey, priest; born London 20 November 1913; ordained priest 1939; Assistant Priest, St James's, Spanish Place 1939-61; Parish Priest of Hendon 1961-63; Vicar General of Westminster Archdiocese 1963-64; Domestic Prelate and Canon of Westminster Cathedral 1964-67; Provoost 1967-79; Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster and Titular Bishop of Sular 1968-79; Apostolic Administrator, Brentwood Diocese 1979-80; Parish Priest, Our Most Holy Redeemer and St Thomas More, Chelsea 1980-88; died Leigh-on-Sea, Essex 26 January 1999.

Dorothy White

DOROTHY WHITE never set out to found the Relatives Association. After she retired from the Civil Service in 1979, she became involved in the support of her mother, who in due course needed a nursing home. This direct experience of long-term care highlighted the stresses placed on relatives; and her subsequent campaigning to improve the provision of care for the elderly and their families led to the establishment of the Relatives Association in 1992, now a national charity.

After an initial poor experience, White identified a good home for her mother, but even then recognised the difficulty of remaining closely involved with her mother's life. Many relatives and friends in this situation blame themselves for failing. White in contrast realised that, if she experienced problems, others must too; indeed for many the challenges would be much greater. Information and support were needed.

Furthermore, she recognised that the 500,000 residents of homes and their visitors were an important

voice which should be mobilised to help plan long-term care. It was this group of people who really knew what was needed - many policymakers and administrators were 40 years younger than care-home residents and did not see the world from the same perspective. Although White was keen to build partnership between family, friends and the care staff, she recognised that this was insufficient for some very poor homes. The only sure way to root out abuse was to link "the eyes and ears" of the visitors in every home with a strong inspectorate.

White had first hoped to persuade a number of existing voluntary organisations connected with the elderly to broaden their remit to address the needs of relatives too. None offered to do so but one, Council and Care, provided her with a base from which to launch a new mutual aid organisation.

White then worked six long days a week, answering the telephone to anxious relatives, developing the organisation, fund-raising. In 1992 the

Relatives Association was formally launched at the House of Commons.

By 1993 the association was independent, with its own charitable status. By 1994 White had raised enough money to employ a director. Later, this post was supplemented by an advice worker and local development staff, and an African Caribbean project followed. Recently Relatives Associations have been established for Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as 26 local groups in England.

The association continues to function largely on voluntary effort, and White herself remained actively involved in the day-to-day work, in the chair until 1996 and then as Founder President. She also continued to assist on the Helpline; her empathy, knowledge and determination was of enormous value to callers. This involvement was fundamental to White's approach. She did not feel happy on the creative policy side without grounding decisions in real life.

Born Dorothy Gerrish in Esher,



Relatives Associations

Surrey, in 1924, she attended St Swinburn's School in Winchester before reading Economics at the London School of Economics, at that time evacuated to Cambridge. Her prime sphere of interest throughout her life was social policy and administration, a world into which she was swept in 1945, the year she

married John White, when "called up" from LSE to the Ministry of Health. She worked first in the team that brought in the National Health Service under Aneurin Bevan, the Health Minister, and then on the National Assistance Act, and from 1951 on maternity and child welfare.

After the birth of her third son in 1958 Dorothy White temporarily left the Civil Service and gained experience in youth work, teaching and lecturing on management. In 1966 she was asked to return and joined the Department of Education and Science, where she worked on health reorganisation and special education. She took early retirement in 1979, and became a management consultant.

Meanwhile, in addition to her having a growing family and a full-time job, White's activities in the voluntary sector expanded. She was extensively involved in Barnet Voluntary Service Council and in 1992 was appointed OBE for her work there. She had also begun active involvement with Network Housing Association, one of the biggest hous-

ing associations in the country - a commitment she always retained.

White remained determined to help improve the world even as her health failed. In her last month she was still speaking at meetings and gave evidence to the staff of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care. She had hoped to chair the Relatives Association Annual Conference on 9 November; unable to do so due to chemotherapy treatment, she taped a message saying she hoped to be there in years to come.

She also reminded people that safeguarding the NHS was the responsibility of everyone and argued that it needed to adapt to the growing numbers of older people who so desperately require its services. She felt that the present time offered a "window of opportunity" which must be seized to "review the ethics and structure of the health services for older people".

JENNY STILES

Dorothy White had an indomitable spirit, writes Baroness Nicholson,

and a passionate sense of justice for lonely, elderly people. She mobilised her extensive network of friends and neighbours to fight the dismal impact on family links of prolonged stays by elderly frail men and women in Britain's retirement and nursing homes.

I was proud to be a member of her clan. Small at first but now widespread, the Relatives Association now puts policy proposals and implements in practical ways. Dorothy's own vision for Britain's elderly, secure and comfortable in their declining years with family ties enhanced and not dislocated.

Her enchanting personality was matched by a lifetime of hard work. Many thousands of elderly people have already benefited from her energy and wisdom and thousands will in the future.

Dorothy Marian Gerrish, public servant; born Esher, Surrey 13 October 1924; OBE 1992; married 1945 John White (three sons); died London 26 November 1998.

Can I help my depressed friend?

Peter's friend Philip, a highly intelligent man, suffers bad bouts of depression. He's often been hospitalised, but has refused ECT. He's coped well for six years with help and now he's applying for jobs. Although he often gets short-listed, he is invariably turned down when potential employers hear about his illness. Peter feels that this smacks of prejudice. Can he help?

VIRGINIA'S ADVICE

It's ghastly being depressed. It's ghastly being around someone who's depressed. Because what we all want, when a friend or relation of ours is ill, is to do something. Now, if they have cancer or a broken leg, it's relatively simple. We know that in the "doing" stakes, we're impotent. There's no way we can pop round with a chemotherapy casserole or a bag of plaster. "Would you like a splint?" isn't part of the patient's vocabulary. Nor is: "Do let me nip round with some radiotherapy."

No, we should, we feel wrongly, be able to cure our depressed friends ourselves, simply by offering hope or love, neither of which is on prescription. We should be able to make life worth living for them, by telling them jokes, by encouraging them to go for walks and get some fresh air, or simply by being there. When someone close to us is very, very depressed (and I'm talking here of true depression, not everyday gloom) the fact that they can't be cheered up by us often seems like a criticism of our own powers.

So when you say to someone who's depressed: "Hey, it's a lovely day, the sun's shining, so why don't we go for a walk and then go to the movies and then go out for a scrumptious supper?" and they say they really don't want to, we feel terribly rejected. To make them feel better is almost a selfish act. If we don't succeed, we feel

worse about ourselves, and before we know where we are, we're blaming them at some level about making us feel bad about ourselves, and then getting angry with them. That's when the awful phrase "Pull yourself together!" comes into play.

Now, if Philip is depressed, Peter shouldn't feel guilty. When you're depressed, you could win the pools and have Gwyneth Paltrow stalking you, and all you'd say would be: "So what?"

What is so terrible about suffering from depression is the very inability to accept any kind of help. This is one of the symptoms. If depression could be alleviated by declarations of love, or offers of snail walks or holidays or dinners, then no one would ever suffer from the condition. The dreadful thing about depression is that it puts up a barrier to accepting anything from outside. For the depressed person, everything is coloured from the inside.

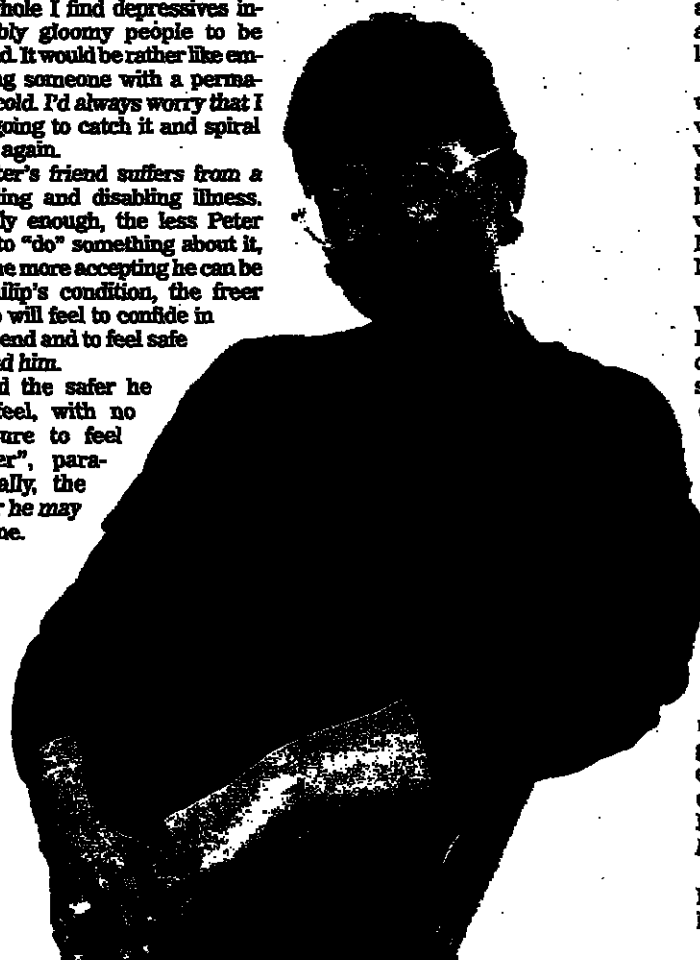
Peter can do no more than he's doing. Perhaps he could suggest that Philip shouldn't set his mind against ECT, which can have an absolutely magical effect on some people who are recommended it. And perhaps he could sympathise with him about his job problems, while at the same time pointing out that no employer wants to take on anyone who's going to be off work for long periods, whether they suffer from depression, migraines, broken limbs or whatever.

I suffer from bouts of severe

depression. And yet I would never employ anyone who had a history of taking time off to be in hospital. I would also not want to employ a depressive, simply because on the whole I find depressives incredibly gloomy people to be around. It would be rather like employing someone with a permanent cold. I'd always worry that I was going to catch it and spiral down again.

Peter's friend suffers from a crippling and disabling illness. Fully enough, the less Peter tries to "do" something about it, and the more accepting he can be of Philip's condition, the freer Philip will feel to confide in his friend and to feel safe around him.

And the safer he can feel, with no pressure to feel "better", paradoxically, the better he may become.



Turn the illness into a plus. In our bigoted society, Philip on the face of it would have little chance in gaining suitable employment - employers are not under any obligations to employ candidates with a history of mental health problems.

My advice (as a mental nurse) would be for him to target jobs where his mental health history would be an advantage, eg mental health charities, or mental health trusts looking for advocacy workers, and progress from there. MARK A TULL RMN BSc Hons Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Why not try voluntary work? I feel so sorry for Philip, but why does everyone want to work for a salary? I take it he's been able to cope without money so far?

For instance, if he went to Social Services he'd be asked to do Meals on Wheels or something similar and see sights that would pull him up to take a second look at his life.

I'm afraid Philip is not looking at himself from an employer's point of view. I've been on boards where a member of staff has come up with a psychological fitness and, quite rightly, backed by their union has got a small fortune out of their employer. Employers these days cannot afford to take such a risk. DAWN MUIRHEAD London SW19

Philip needs your support. Depression is surprisingly com-

mon, affecting 12 per cent of the adult population. Therapy, though good, can never be seen as a cure, and unfortunately it is this fact that many employees will dwell on.

When you are close to a sufferer, it can be infuriating to watch their self-esteem be destroyed as once again their vicious circle of self-hatred begins.

Regardless of his employment status, a sufferer from depression needs your support and absolute faith in him. It may sometimes

seem as if your words are falling on deaf ears, but they will be appreciated and help enormously. LAURA, Oxford

Start your own business. Philip should take up a venture of his own. You could perhaps help him to establish it. He could help people with tax, entrance and final exams, CVs etc. There is plenty of room for somebody who can give intelligent help for a fee. BEA NEWBERRY, London SW18

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia, I am an extremely experienced woman, working for a new firm on a contractual basis in a senior position, but I work at home as well as on site. The company have told me that they'll provide me with a bleeper so they can contact me whenever they like. I was expected to be delighted about this "perk". But in fact I value my privacy, and feel phobic about being able to be reached at all times, when I'm walking in the hills or when I'm in my bath. I'm frightened of it ringing when I'm driving, I find it bad-mannered to have phones going off when I'm talking to someone, and if I put it on "vibrate" I'd have to wear it Sellotaped to my skin as,

unlike men who have the waistbands of trousers, or pockets, I often have nowhere it could be attached to my clothes. The same argument would apply to a mobile phone. I know lots of people hate mobiles going off all the time, but does anyone share my phobia about actually owning a bleeper or mobile? How do they cope? Yours sincerely, Valerie

Anyone who has advice quoted will be sent a bouquet from Interflora. Send letters and dilemmas to Virginia Ironside, "The Independent", 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, fax 0171-383 2182, or e-mail dilemmas@independent.co.uk - giving a postal address for the bouquet.

It's OK mum, I'm not pregnant

Why does contraception for teenagers cause such widespread alarm? By Jeremy Laurance

TEENAGE SEX is a dangerous issue and no one knows that better than Professor John Guillebaud. Even he, however, was taken aback by the ferocious row he triggered on Tuesday when, as professor of family planning and reproductive health at University College, London, he was reported to have suggested that 10-year-old schoolgirls could be fitted with a contraceptive device that would allow them to be as

promiscuous as they chose without any fear of pregnancy.

The moral right reacted with predictable outrage. Life - the anti-abortion organisation - demanded his arrest, while the campaigner Victoria Gillick said that his proposal was tantamount to recommending that young girls be spayed.

Possibly more hurtful for the professor, who is also director of the Margaret Pyke clinic, and has a long and dis-

tinguished record of lecturing and writing on matters of sexual health, was the way his friends in the family planning movement also turned on him.

The Brook Advisory Centres for young people accused him of advocating eugenics, and the British Pregnancy Advisory Centre said it was "a dangerous road to go down".

How did this compassionate and thoughtful man find himself embroiled in such an unpleasant row? To understand this, and to draw out the true implications of what he said, it is necessary to go back to the origins of the story and trace its emergence on to the national scene.

Professor Guillebaud made his remarks at a conference held at the Royal Society of Medicine on Friday 22 January. The conference was entitled "Key Advances in the Clinical Management of Contraception" and, as an expert, he had been invited to set out his vision of the future.

In his speech, he expressed enthusiasm for a new, Dutch-made device called Implanon, a tiny, 30mm rod of hormones that is inserted under the skin of the arm and lasts for three years. It is a refined, smaller version of an earlier device called Norplant and was granted a European licence last December.

Professor Guillebaud suggested that this could be the forerunner of an ideal, forgettable contraceptive that was reversible, had no side-effects and would finally deliver women from the tyranny of having to control their fertility with tricky, ineffective or risky methods such as the pill and the condom.

"What we are striving for is a form of contraception that you can turn on or off as you wish," he said.

Then he added: "In the future, and as a social policy, when you have an area with a huge rate of teenage pregnancies you could go into a school, obviously with the consent of the parents, and fit this device so that everybody would start out not being able to have a baby. It could be fitted into girls once they had had their periods but before they had had sex - for instance, at the time when they were having their rubella jabs."

His remarks were reported in The Observer the following Sunday, 24 January, under the



If teenagers feel they can be open about sex, unwanted pregnancies are less likely

headline "Contraceptive jabs [sic] forecast for children" but failed to elicit a reaction. They were then reported in General Practitioner, the magazine for family doctors, whence they were picked up by the Press Association, which put Professor Guillebaud's views to a range of anti-abortion and right-wing family organisations, which reacted with fury. The story subsequently ran yesterday in most national newspapers and on TV and radio.

In the future, facts got lost. At the Royal Society of Medicine's conference, Professor Guillebaud had been setting out his vision of the future, not of the present. Nor had he advocated compulsion. Contraception should always be a matter of choice, he said.

Even as a future scenario, his vision is not uncontroversial. What he had tried to do was to look forward to the day, at least a decade hence, when the perfect, reversible contraceptive became available - what he dubbed his "magical brand X" - and to consider how

society might react. He acknowledged that medical science was running ahead of social attitudes and that family planning groups were wary of intervening in such a way in the lives of such young people.

"But you can imagine that one day it would seem natural to take this kind of action," he added. Indeed, you can. To me, as the father of a 10-year-old daughter (and teenage sons), the idea of dealing with the mechanics of preventing pregnancy in an efficient and risk-free way has a strong appeal. It would leave parents and teachers free to focus on the emotional context of relationships - the importance of respect, the avoidance of hurt and

the value of friendship and love - without being sidetracked by reminders to pack a condom with the taxi fare home.

The fear that easier contraception means easier, more plentiful and more promiscuous sex dominates debate on the moral right. But it is not borne out by the facts. Britain has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the world and the age of first sexual intercourse is dropping. In the Netherlands, where frankness is preferred to ignorance on sexual matters, teenagers begin sexual relationships on average six months later than their British counterparts and their teenage pregnancy rate is lower.

If teenagers feel that there is someone to whom they can take their problems and seek advice, it's more likely they'll be open and confident about discussing sex.

The mechanics of contraception are only one part of sex, but they have a disturbing habit of distracting attention from the relationship that should lie at its heart.

Women would finally be free from risky methods such as the pill

THE INDEPENDENT
Friday, 4 February 1999
P. 10

Julien Temple

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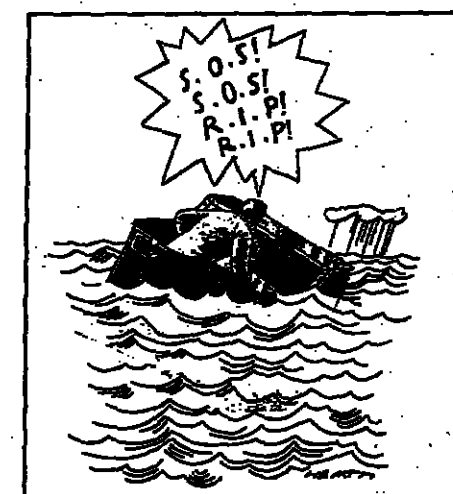
THE MILL

POETIC LICENCE

BY MARTIN NEWELL

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MORSE

After 160 years of helping to save lives, Morse code was officially replaced worldwide this week by satellite and ground-based technology. The system, devised in 1840 by the American portrait painter Samuel Morse, will no longer be used for maritime distress signals.



Dots and dashes did it did it
Did it in the films
And way out in the woolly west
Awaiting freight from Santa Fe
A marshall in the midday sun
Stands apprehensive with a gun
As sagebrush miles along the track
The buzzards squatting on the poles
Hear signals whisper down the wires
Past cactus, cowbills, gopher holes
Where humberweed goes rolling by
And three had humberweed wait to die...

Dots and dashes did it did it
Did it down the line
When Mister Morse tapped out his test
"What hath God wrought!"
The sentence stayed
Unanswered by the snoozing past
Until the future spoke at last
And wagons came. And men and mines
Then motor cars and longer lines
Spread out across the yawning land
Till progress had the upper hand.

Dots and dashes did it did it
Did it later on.
In radio blips from storm-tossed ships
Whenever wind and wave kicked up
And hapless vessels in distress
Their fares gone up, gone down, gone out
Still sent a desperate SOS
The universal rescue shout.

The dots and dashes did it did it
Did it for so long
It's odd to think they won't be there
Their crotchets/quavers in the air
Dot dot dot dash - the letter V
The wartime sign for Victory
Was Beethoven's Fifth Symphony
And Samuel Morse's rhapsody
The tune still buried where he hid it
Did it did it did it did it.

Knights at the opera

Nikolaus Lehnhoff has some serious thoughts about his new production of *Parsifal*. By Edward Seckerson

The secrets of Nikolaus Lehnhoff's forthcoming English National Opera production of Wagner's *Parsifal* are contained on dozens of Post-it notes clinging like a coded commentary to the pages of his vocal score. There are diagrams, there are cryptic messages, there are questions, there are even answers. But they are for his eyes only.

The blocking is documented here well in advance of the first rehearsal - who stands where, with whom, and why. Like-wise movement is carefully prescribed, precisely tailored to the demands of the music. The positioning of the 48 Knights of the Grail adorns one page of the score like alternative notes on an alternative staff or primitive sketches relating to some ancient masonic rite. It's all very mysterious, all very mathematical. And all subject to change, of course.

Lehnhoff insists that he is not one of those autocratic German directors whose first word is his last word - though he does refer to the score as his "Regie book", which may be translated as "stage-management" or "stage-monopoly".

He arrives hot-foot from rehearsal, score in hand, an eager and highly loquacious man who simply cannot wait to let you in on his act. *Parsifal*, he tells you, has taken a long time to feed itself into his soul, almost as long as it took Wagner to write. Lehnhoff was always uncomfortable with it. The music was attractive, but not the ethos surrounding it. He had long felt that *Parsifal* had been hijacked for its religious symbolism. The character of Gurnemanz was not, in his view, "the Evangelist of the St Parsifal Passion". There was more, much more, to this piece than the triumph of Christianity over paganism. He would, in time, dig deeper. Since signing on for the ENO production, three other companies (including our own Royal Opera) have approached him to do *Parsifal*. "What was in the air?" he asks. His cue to do it.

Lehnhoff is a scholar of Theatre History and Musicology from the universities of Munich and Vienna. He grew up with scores such as *Parsifal*. He was weaned on Wagner. He knows how long everything takes ("Useful for that species of opera director who actually likes music," he adds pointedly). And he knows that the key to a thorough understanding of these prodigious (and elusive) works lies somewhere between the text, which says one thing, and the music, which might say another.

He slaps his hand down on the vocal score, drawing my attention to the bizarre illustration on its cover: a crumpled cartoon knight resembling something out of Asterix. "Isn't it extraordinary? Maybe this is how I should do *Parsifal*," he says, with sufficient conviction to have you wondering if he might indeed be capricious enough to do just that. He has a wispish sense of humour and a healthy cynicism. It's his way of wearing the scholarship lightly, of leavening the seriousness with which Germans traditionally labour their cultural heritage.

Lehnhoff is very much a part of that heritage, yet somehow apart from it. He is his own man, his own one-man show, if you like - no agent, no permanent posting, no ties.



Nikolaus Lehnhoff grew up with scores such as *Parsifal*, and strives to find the meaning that lies between the text and the music. Kalpesh Lathigra

Conditions (a schedule and environment conducive to work) are more important to him than money. Which is why he loves working at Glyndebourne - scene of his highly-praised Janacek productions (he returns there this summer for Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*) - and why he empathises with Wagner, who built his own theatre - the Bayreuth Festival Theatre - in an attempt to insulate his works from what Lehnhoff amusingly refers to as "the fire-escape regime" of repertory opera.

Lehnhoff spent 12 precious years at Bayreuth working with (and at this point serious Wagnerians will bend the knee) the composer's grandson, Wieland Wagner, whom he assisted on (and really serious Wagnerians will now be prostrate) his legendary 1951 production of *Parsifal*. This production was regarded as the summation of all the then radical concepts of light and space and dimension that Wieland (a designer and photographer) had brought to his minimalist Bayreuth stagings.

When Richard Wagner famously said that now he had discovered "the invisible orchestra" (the pit at Bayreuth is hooded for "the invisible theatre"), Lehnhoff believes that he had glimpsed the future according to Wieland. Could less be more?

Lehnhoff's *Parsifal* promises less and more: an endgame for the turn of the century. He sees no point in merely playing

out the rituals of *Parsifal* without seeking to confront and to explore the deeper and more uncomfortable truths that lie behind them. *Parsifal*, he says in hushed, conspiratorial tones, "is an opera about the homelessness of humanity in the 20th century". Each of the characters have lost their way, each has experienced trauma, each wanders aimlessly into an uncertain future, survivors in a wasteland. "This is a world longing for death," he says, "a world locked into a kind of standstill, stalemated - *Totenstarre* [rigor mortis]."

Lehnhoff's 'Parsifal' promises to be an endgame for the turn of the century

At the heart of his conception is the belief that the Knights of the Holy Grail and the perverted Christ figure of Amfortas symbolise the closed societies, religious ideologies, sects, denominations and cults that divide us. "All were founded with the best of intentions," he says, "but instead of bringing humanity together, they have torn it apart - and all in the name of God. Amfortas's wound is our wound - mankind, civilisation..." And to heal is to regenerate, to find a common language

with which we - the human race - can begin communicating again.

And is that common language "Christianity" in the purest sense? A new world order? An end to ideologies and religious in-fighting? Lehnhoff will not answer directly, preferring to let the production speak for itself (though 30 or so minutes have now passed since he opted "not to give too much away"). All he will say is that the character of Parsifal is "the force of nature", the catalyst through which the healing process may begin. A new millennium. A second chance.

Like all truly great works of art, *Parsifal* poses more questions than it answers. Today's answers are tomorrow's questions. Lehnhoff may think he has discovered why the knights and flower maidens music share the same key (because they both represent the extended arms of power systems?), but that realisation may have more dramatic repercussions in his next production, or even the one after that. All he can hope to do for now is clearly to represent his current thinking on stage.

Clarity was something he learned from Wieland Wagner. The rhythms and dynamics of staging, stillness that speaks: gestures that mean something. Lehnhoff learned how and why an operatic character standing in one place for 20 minutes could be exciting. He learned about the power of a single, central metaphor. In his

thrilling Glyndebourne production of Janacek's *The Makropoulos Case*, the entire set moved inexorably, imperceptively throughout the evening, the ground literally shifting beneath the feet of the opera's heroine, Emilia Marty, shifting to the rhythm of eternal life. Because life moves slowly when you're 300 years old. The tension created was extraordinary, both music and drama heightened, extended, stretched to the limit.

Being a musical as well as a theatrical animal, Lehnhoff's relationships with conductors has always been unusually close. On *Parsifal*, Mark Elder has been present at every rehearsal - a rare occurrence in opera, but one which mirrors the significant ties he established when he was assistant to such great names as Karl Böhm and Herbert von Karajan, who insisted that he was by his side in the pit during performances of Wagner's *Ring* at the New York Met, with a hotline to the lighting booth (Lehnhoff to lighting control: "More light on Wotan"; lighting control to Lehnhoff: "Which one is he?"). When Lehnhoff told Karajan that Wagner took only 2 hours 4 minutes over *Das Rheingold* (Karajan's favourite *Ring* opera), Karajan was determined to match it.

Back at the Coliseum, Lehnhoff will doubtless be reminding Elder of Wagner's speeds for *Parsifal*. Drama, he'll be saying, we're in the theatre, not in church.

Violent steps

DANCE

EDWARD II
SADLER'S WELLS
LONDON

NARRATIVE BALLET is not dead, although David Bintley has made a few duds on the way. His *Edward II*, created for the Stuttgart Ballet in 1995, was staged for Birmingham Royal Ballet two years later and has been packing regional theatres ever since. It has been a long time coming to London, but it was worth the wait so that it could punch us in the face, and hold and horrify our attention.

"A dark and bloody piece," as Bintley has said, *Edward II* is a two-act ballet based on Christopher Marlowe's play. It is a grown-up ballet, unusual in that its characters are nearly all men and that it deals with homosexuality. Perhaps that is why Jasper Conran tries to introduce an occasional contemporary note in his costumes - to highlight the drama's immediacy and present-day relevance - although the second half's sudden shift to lounge suits jars as self-conscious contrivance in his otherwise effective visual scheme.

Homosexuality and the struggle for political power: Edward II neglects his kingdom and alienates his wife Isabella in his infatuation with Piers Gaveston; his barons, led by Mortimer, pitch the country into insurrection and enlist Isabella's support. On the programme's printed page, the synopsis reads like a dense tangle of opposing wills. Yet on the stage, the action sweeps you up in its headlong rush like a tautly plotted thriller, even if this is at the expense of choreographic subtlety.

In this, Bintley is given tremendous support by his company. Wolfgang Stollwitzer - Stuttgart's original Edward, now a member of ERB - is a compelling and handsome focus as the anti-hero king, a golden figure whose irresponsibility leads to his tragedy. Sabrina Lenzi is a lovely Isabella, the frightened and vulnerable young bride arrived from France. Joseph Cipolla is a suitably thunderous, looming Mortimer, the arch-manipulator who seduces Isabella in his search for political might. It says a lot for the skill of the choreographer and his cast that they manage as the story progresses to turn the tables on our sympathies, so that by the end Edward is the martyr and Isabella a deserved outcast.

Their duets vividly encapsulate the emotional twists and turns. And so do Bintley's sensational set-pieces, such as the one presenting the horrible disarray of civil war, with criss-crossing lines of combatants, and among them the appalling spectre of Death. Meanwhile, John McCabe's score rumbles and pounds, re-enforcing the drama's every twist, and Peter J Davidson's sets prove wonderfully sinister. Do see *Edward II*: there is a lot of violence and dying, but you will enjoy it.

NADINE MEISNER

Booking: 0171-863 8000. A version of this review appeared in later editions of yesterday's paper

The man who shot the Sixties

Lennon, Jagger, Marianne Faithfull... John 'Hoppy' Hopkins photographed them all in their prime. And only now is his work being discovered again. By Chris Arnot

THE POET Allen Ginsberg was naked apart from his underpants. And his underpants were on his head as he danced happily on his 40th birthday at the party that went on all night in a basement in Chelsea. John Lennon turned up, took one look at Ginsberg in the buff and said: "You can't do that in front of birds." Well, it was 1965 and Yoko was still some way in the future.

John "Hoppy" Hopkins photographed them all, and many more. His picture of Ginsberg's party-piece is part of an exhibition of his photo-journalism which opened on Monday at the Light House gallery in Wolverhampton. The photos cover a comparatively short period: starting in 1960 when Hopkins gave up his short career as a nuclear physicist and finished in 1965 when he began to drift into the psychedelic scene in London.

Now 61, he lives in a bleak part of Islington. His collection of 1300 negatives would have continued to languish in a cardboard box were it not for a chance meeting with Evelyn Wilson, curator at the Light House. Of the 30 photographs he has chosen, most were used by broadsheet newspapers, or in *Melody Maker*, *Queen* Magazine or *Peace News*. A few are being published for the first time, notably two atmospheric shots reflecting the seediness of Notting Hill in the Sixties. One shows a bloated tattooist at work on the fleshy back of a young



John Hopkins with Julie Felix and Michele Poole in Trafalgar Square in 1966

woman, the other a rubber fetishist in the kitchen of his bedsit. What makes the picture intriguing is the very ordinariness of his surroundings. His rubber boots are planted on mock-parquet floor. His rubber pants are leaning against a draining board cluttered with Lux, Vim and other household names. To his right is the sort of water heater that would now be confined to a museum.

No wonder Evelyn Wilson says: "These pictures seem very far removed from today." Another shows a summer dawn streaming in through a window at Alexandra Palace towards the end of a Rolling

Stones "all-nighter". A couple are clutching each other on an almost deserted dancefloor and they're wearing overcoats - not exactly fashion items for all-night ravers in the Nineties. The Stones feature elsewhere: Brian Jones with his back to the audience at the Ally Pally. Mick and Keith barely awake before hunch in a Soho café. So clear is the print that you can trace of a scene on Keith Richard's unified face.

It's the freckles that catch the eye in a close-up of Marianne Faithfull, looking young and virginal in 1965. "She was so beautiful," says Hopkins, "that people underestimated her intelligence."

Not something you could say about Allen Ginsberg who is pictured in the same year, fully clothed this time, addressing the Poets of Our Time reading, a key event in the development of the Sixties counter-culture. "It was the first time people could look around and say: 'Hey, there are 7,000 here, or however many holes it takes to fill the Albert Hall,'" says Hopkins who, by the following year, had become something of a hippy. He was one of those behind a well-meaning but failed attempt to improve education for black children in Notting Hill. The London Free School set up in a burnt-out basement.

"We were cooking on open fires on an earth floor," he says. "It was like something out of the Middle Ages. But it wasn't successful because we weren't good at organising." As his money from photo-journalism drained away, he had the bright idea of a fund-raising gig and the even brighter idea of using a young band managed by two friends. They were called Pink Floyd.

After three "mobbed-out" gigs in a church hall, Hopkins found them a better venue. The UFO opened in Tottenham Court Road on December 23, 1966, and stayed open all night. It was Britain's first psychedelic nightclub. Jimi Hendrix would call in and jam. Various Beatles "hung out" there.

Hopkins enjoyed the music but his first love, one suspects, is jazz. Indeed, his favourite photo is of the hands of Thelonious Monk playing the piano in Birmingham in 1964. It is, indeed, a beautiful picture, the ebony and ivory juxtaposed with beautifully lit black hands protruding from white cuffs. But what makes it even more special to the man behind the camera is that it has been signed by Monk himself. A photographer who has known so many celebrities can still be a bit star-struck.

Pop, Protest and Psychedelia by John "Hoppy" Hopkins is at the Light House, Wolverhampton, until 28 February (01902 716055)



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One child in five suffers mental stress

By JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

PRESSURES ON children to succeed and mollycoddling by parents who fear for their safety are turning out a young generation that is emotionally illiterate and at an increased risk of mental breakdown, a report claimed yesterday.

One in five people aged four to twenty is estimated to suffer from problems, ranging from bed-wetting to anorexia, which significantly disrupt their lives.

The toll of mental ill health has been rising in all developed countries since the Second World War and neglect of children's emotional needs in the modern world is to blame, according to the report, by the Mental Health Foundation.

In a three-year study, *The Big Picture*, published yesterday, which examined more than 1,000 pieces of evidence, the foundation concludes that children are failing to thrive emotionally, are becoming less resilient and less able to cope with the ups and downs of life.

It says children are represented as "evil demons" or as "dolls and angels" but not as humans, and that an adult-centred society treats them as "designer accessories or pampered pets". The pressures on them to achieve are enormous but too little is done to help them to build the resilience they need to cope when things go wrong. "Huge sums [are invested] in our children's intellectual abilities and there can be no reason for not investing in their mental health and emotional intelligence," the report says. Although welcoming recent



"Children must be allowed to try things and be free to experiment so that they develop their own abilities to solve problems"

Photonic/Gunnar Smoliansky

government initiatives on children and the family the report warns that they "still pussyfoot around the fundamental fact that the root cause of so much

dysfunction in individuals, in families, in schools, and in society as a whole is poor mental and emotional health."

June McKerrrow, director of the foundation, said risk-taking by children was an essential part of growing up, but the over-regimented lives imposed by worried parents had reduced

their opportunities to learn from their mistakes. "Children must be able to plan and take control, they must be allowed to try things

and be free to experiment so that they develop their own abilities to solve problems. "We know some things will go wrong and others will go

right and then they can choose where to place their energies." Ms McKerrrow said many social problems, such as unemployment, were beyond the power of governments to solve and people had to be emotionally prepared to cope with the consequences by extending their personal resources and interests.

Schools played a key role but there was "huge concern" about the narrowness of the National Curriculum. For primary school children, playing with their peers was an important part of their development, but this is under threat, she said.

"Teachers say they have had to cut the playtime of five-year-olds by up to half and drop singing lessons in order to make more time for arithmetic. There is no time to build emotional intelligence - it is all focused on the three Rs."

By changing social attitudes to children, many of the risks to their mental health could be reduced. But for those children who succumbed to the pressures and showed signs of failing to progress at school or found it difficult to make friends, early intervention was needed in the form of treatment, counselling, peer support or specific initiatives such as anti-bullying programmes.

"A fundamental shift in society is needed to accept that 'mental' health can be a positive as well as a negative state," Ms McKerrrow said.

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Women find home less satisfying

MORE WOMEN than ever before have become increasingly disenchanted with the state of their family life, according to a new survey published yesterday.

In the survey, conducted by the monthly women's magazine *Prima*, seven in ten said that home life was less satisfying than ever before, blaming lack of time and the cost of childcare. Forty-one per cent said they did not have enough time to fulfil their domestic and professional tasks satisfactorily, while 31 per cent said the Government should help by providing state-sponsored nurseries for working mothers. Some 80 per cent said tax relief was the best motive for marrying, and staying married.

The survey examined women's attitudes on a wide range of family issues. They were asked about the competing demands of children and work, single motherhood and the importance of marriage. There was strong support for marriage with 78 per cent describing it as vital for stable family life and 64 per cent saying divorce should be made more difficult.

By KATE WATSON-SMYTH

Launching the survey, Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, said families were under more pressure than ever before. "Cherie and I have always tried to make sure we have time for each other and the kids," he said. "We do live in a goldfish bowl, so it's all the more important to keep your feet on the ground and try to make life as normal as possible for ourselves and the children."

Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, said: "The survey has captured a very clear snapshot of attitudes to family life in Britain today - a strong vote of confidence goes to family life and the importance of marriage."

The report, based on 1,000 replies, was part of a campaign by *Prima* that is intended to investigate all aspects of family life in Britain.

The magazine said the survey had posed "fundamental questions which offered the women of Britain the opportunity to help the Government develop strategies that will shape family life in the future".

Mobile phone failures exposed

By CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

MOBILE PHONE companies' coverage often does not match the promises of their advertising, according to a study produced for the telecommunications watchdog Ofcom.

Despite claims by the four main networks that they cover almost 100 per cent of the population, in practice making a phone call can be a frustrating experience with, for example, up to 25 per cent of calls being cut off during rail journeys for users of the Vodafone network. Even in cities, users of One 2 One's service can find that only 91 per cent work, which means that almost one phone call in 10 may "drop out" mid-sentence. The best on both counts was Orange, where 97 per cent of city calls and 89 per cent of rail calls were successful.

Ofcom commissioned the survey, from Freshfields Communications, after the networks refused to offer their own independent figures that might help prospective users to decide which was the best network. "There needs to be clarity so that people can compare the quality of service between networks to get the best deal," said Ofcom's director-general, David Edmunds.

He will repeat the survey

SUCCESS RATE

For all cities	Orange	One 2 One	Celnet	Vodafone
City calls	97%	91%	97%	97%
Rail journeys	89%	75%	89%	75%
For all journeys	92%	85%	92%	85%

Source: Freshfields Communications

unless the companies - Orange, One 2 One, Celnet and Vodafone - start offering such independent data themselves. The survey used computerised equipment to try to make 90-second calls in three cities - London, Edinburgh, and Cardiff - and on rail lines between London, Edinburgh, Crewe and Cardiff.

The railway coverage was noticeably variable. "On the trains in rural areas, much lower call success rates were experienced, which, of course, will contribute significantly to customer dissatisfaction on those routes," the report noted. The networks said that they are working on ways to offer comparative information.

سكرا من الاربع

The human volcano

Said Taghmaoui's anger first exploded on to our screens in *La Haine*. Hollywood has been on his trail ever since, but Morocco's first bona fide film star is the last person to compromise with 'show business'. By John Wrathall

Said Taghmaoui complains of jet lag, having criss-crossed the Atlantic between Italy, where he has just finished a film, Los Angeles, where he is preparing his first Hollywood role, and London, where he has flown in for the premiere of *Hideous Kinky* and a long day of press interviews. But you wouldn't know it to look at him. A moment ago he was bouncing around in Hyde Park for the photographer, and now in a deserted disco in the bowels of the Dorchester, he is pretending to be a DJ, miming over imaginary decks as he scratches his own conversation - "Oh my god, tch tch tch, oh my god..."

It doesn't take a great leap of imagination to see why director Gillies MacKinnon (who launched a number of young Brits in *Small Faces*) cast him as Bill, the irrepressible Marrakesh acrobat who takes up with a young English hippy (Kate Winslet) and her two daughters in *Hideous Kinky*, an adaptation of Esther Freud's novel. To prepare for the role, Taghmaoui spent a month training as an acrobat before playing his trade in one of the world's most competitive arenas - Marrakesh's seething central square, the Djemaa el Fna. "You have to be really strong to get the attention of all those people," he sighs. But somehow I'm sure he managed.

Hideous Kinky lights up whenever Taghmaoui is on screen. "He's a volcano," says MacKinnon. "Even when he's physically put a lid on it, you can tell by his eyes that it could all erupt at any moment." Before acting, Taghmaoui was a boxer, and it's easy to imagine him strutting about in the ring, arms raised in triumph.

Born and brought up in Paris, the youngest of 10 in a family of Moroccan immigrants, Taghmaoui remains intensely proud of his Berber heritage. His family come from near Essaouira, itself something of a magnet for hippies in the Sixties when Jimi Hendrix hosted parties on the beach there. When not extolling the culture and tradition of his spiritual homeland, Taghmaoui is keen to promote its strengths as an ideal film location. "Morocco has the best light I've seen in my life," he says. "And good professionals - a lot of movies are made there, with the best directors in the world."

A couple of years ago, when Taghmaoui was acting in *The Garden of Eden*, one of the Italian biblical epics that seem to be permanently shooting at the enormous Atlas Studios outside the southern desert town of Ouarzazate, Scorsese was across the way shooting *Kundun*, with the High Atlas standing in for Tibet.



Said Taghmaoui: 'All the blah, blah and the fashion are just show business - cinema is different'

Tom Craig

"King Hassan is very proud of me," Taghmaoui states matter-of-factly. It's easy to understand why: Taghmaoui isn't just a one-man tourist board, but the first Moroccan to make it big in international cinema (with the possible exception of Fassbinder's muse and sometime lover, El Hedi ben Salem, who came to a bad end, hanging himself in a French jail). Taghmaoui won't be drawn to speculate on Morocco's future when Hassan, who has kept a tight grip on the country for nearly 40 years, finally dies. But when the conversation strays to neighbouring Algeria, the volcano suddenly flashes again. "Of course this country's fucked up, after 150 years of colonialism," he snaps. "Imagine, I come to your house and say to your children, 'You're not allowed to speak English. The first person

who speaks English, I will fuck his mother.' Imagine this for 150 years."

The anger in his eyes will be familiar to anyone who saw *La Haine*, the film which rocked France in 1994. An explosive day in the life of three disaffected young men from the troubled banlieues of Paris, it revolved around Taghmaoui's Said, the character we follow from the film's opening shot, and the only one still alive at the end. Taghmaoui was only 21 when he helped director Mathieu Kassovitz write *La Haine*, which went on to win the scriptwriting prize at Cannes. "A lot of things happened when *La Haine* came out," he says wistfully. "People burned cinemas in France. But you think a movie's going to change anything? A revolution is made with weapons, not with movies."

After *La Haine*'s international success,

Taghmaoui was courted by Hollywood, but never found a script he liked. He got to meet Tom Cruise, but he remains defiantly unfazed by celebrity, including that of his *Hideous Kinky* co-star Winslet, who since shooting the film in Morocco in 1997 has been transformed into the star of the Most Successful Film of All Time, complete with entourage. (She is holding court in a neighbouring room - presumably why we're at the Dorchester in the first place.)

"When you're really funny, and you have nothing to eat," Taghmaoui asks rhetorically, "who is impressive then? Maybe an apple is impressive. What's important is what you put in the movie - on the pellicule - because that will stay. All the blah blah blah, the fashion, is just show business. But cinema and show business are two different things."

Sometimes they have to deal together, that's all."

However, Taghmaoui has succumbed to the lure of Hollywood, and is about to star alongside George Clooney in *Three Kings*, a film about the Gulf War by David O Russell, known for the spiky comedies *Spanking the Monkey* and *Flirting with Disaster*. Hollywood has had a pretty blinkered view of Arab issues - "horrible, racist" is how Taghmaoui describes the depiction of Islamic terrorists in *True Lies* and *Executive Decision*. But *Three Kings*, he says, will break the mould. "According to this film, the war is only for oil, not to save Kuwait," he says. "It's *Apocalypse Now* for the Gulf War." The volcano, you sense, is almost ready to erupt.

'Hideous Kinky' is reviewed opposite

DOUBLE BILL

CLAUDE MILLER,
DIRECTOR OF 'CLASS TRIP'
ON HIS IDEAL
CINEMATIC PAIRING



THE SEARCHERS
(JOHN FORD, 1956)
BREAKING THE WAVES
(LARS VON TRIER, 1996)

I HAVE chosen these two films not because of their relevance to the history of cinema, but more because they have formed an integral part of the history of my own emotions. In *The Searchers*, John Wayne is a violent, racist Indian hunter. Towards the end he pursues his niece, Natalie Wood, who was abducted at an early age and raised by Indians. When Wayne catches up with her, you think her time has come. But he picks her up in his arms and says: "Come on Debbie, we are going home."

In *Breaking The Waves*, Emily Watson has been raised in a very strict puritanical and religious way, and has just married the man of her dreams. She calls him from a phone box to tell him explicitly, and rather crudely, how much she loves him. Especially his big knob.

Cinema can show how emotions erupt and change the course of one life, breaking the barriers that make a person follow unwritten rules bred into them through education and culture. Watching these two films together, I would expect the public to be deeply moved, their emotions challenging their pre-conceived ideas and stereotypes, if any.

It can't hurt to spend five hours completely captivated. Being a film-maker, I do not believe in analysing too intellectually the films I enjoy. I leave this to the critics.

INTERVIEW BY
JENNIFER RODGER

VIDEO WATCH MIKE HIGGINS

The X-Files Movie (15), available to rent now. In which our heroes, Mulder and Scully (David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson) retire to Kent to take an evening course in crop-circle-making. Not really, more's the pity. But you don't half wish

creator, Chris Carter, could have let the director, Rob Bowman, stray from the spooks' spaceship formula for the show's big-screen outing. It's the usual suspects: secret governments and aliens, this time in cahoots

with a plan to recolonise the earth. What coherence there is, is down to the residual strength of the TV show's characterisation and its exploitation of millennial conspiracy mania. Bowman, however, departs from the television series in letting rip

with the special effects: there's nothing coy about the depiction of parasitic aliens or their vast breeding stations (both of which are rip-offs of *Alien* and that rosy Eighties serial, *V*).

High and Low (12), available to buy, £15.99. You wouldn't have thought Akira Kurosawa would be an Ed McBain fan, but, sure enough, the American writer's novel is the source of this tense detective thriller. A boy is snatched in the grounds of a wealthy industrialist, Kingo Gondo (Toshiro Mifune), but it isn't long before everyone, kidnapper included, realises that it's not Gondo's son but his chauffeur's who's been taken by mistake. Regardless, the kidnapper maintains his demand for a ruinous ransom.

The first hour is given over to Gondo's quandary. He finds it difficult to show the same willingness to meet the kidnapper's demands when it transpires that it's not his own flesh and blood at risk.

Once the plight of the kidnapped child is brought to a head, however, Kurosawa moves from the sweaty theatre of Gondo's sitting-room to the streets of suburban Tokyo. It's a complete change in tone to the first hour or so.

The methodical ingenuity, as well as humanity, of the police sweep you along until an abrupt conclusion brings you up hard against the pitiful desperation of the kidnapper.

Metroland (18), available to rent now. Philip Saville's adaptation of Julian Barnes's novel is studiously crafted and thoroughly dull. It's 1977 and Chris (Christian Bale) doesn't know what panics him most: his mortgage, his marriage, his job or his child. Bafflingly, Saville seems to think that Chris's dilemma is unexplored cinematic territory and he takes laborious pains to dramatise that old chestnut, responsibility vs desire.

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NEW YORK POST
"VERY FUNNY"
DAILY MAIL
"HUNTER'S BEST PERFORMANCE SINCE 'THE PIANO'..."
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How will you fill the gap?

A six-month sabbatical from work – it sounds like a dream, but it could be part of your job contract. By Kate Hilpern

Taking a gap year, employers are increasingly recognising, is not such a bad thing. If you've travelled, you'll have gained independence, a sense of adventure and an appetite for challenge. And even if you spent it at home, you're likely to have gained some kind of additional expertise.

Imagine, then, how much more employers could gain from providing their staff with a chance to take a break during employment. "One assumption is that they'll lose money as well as suffering from employees losing touch in their absence," explains Angela Baron of the Institute of Personnel and Development. "But more and more organisations are realising that it allows employees to take time to self-develop, to fulfil their dreams, and to return to work with renewed enthusiasm."

Apple Computer is perhaps at the forefront of sabbatical programmes in the UK. After five years' service, it forces staff members to take a one-month paid break, on to which they can add annual leave. "It gives people a chance to do that Australia trip, or take up a course," says a spokesperson. "And we gain, because it induces staff to stay with the company as well as working hard because there's such a generous reward. For some, it's more enticing than a promotion."

Likewise, at McDonald's, a paid leave of eight weeks is given to employees with ten years' service. "Often, employees simply use the time to reflect what direction their career is going in – so when they return, we have the benefit of getting the very best out of them," comments spokeswoman Fenella Burns.

Even career breaks – which are generally longer than sabbaticals as well as being unpaid – can benefit companies enormously, says Angela Baron. "If the choice is between losing a good employee that you've invested a lot of effort and money in training, or allowing them a year off to climb a mountain or bring up their kids, there shouldn't be any contest."

Tesco, for instance, finds its enhanced career-break scheme an effective way to retain people with skills and knowledge, as well as avoiding any costs of recruiting newcomers. Like most schemes, the supermarket chain's allows qualifying candidates to take up to five years off work.

Naturally, many employers require a formal interview first. In this case, says Jean Balcombe of the Industrial Society, it is essential to identify your real value to your employer; the costs he or she would have in replacing you; your skills, experience and knowledge; and how your plans fit into your employers' future development and

planned growth. "Where possible, suggest doing a number of job assignments in your absence – keeping you up-to-date with changes," says Balcombe.

Gillian Cann, 37, recently took a five-year career break from her job at Abbey National. "You've got to be pro-active about keeping in touch – it's so easy to lose confidence when you're away from your desk, especially when, like me, you've spent the time at home bringing up children."

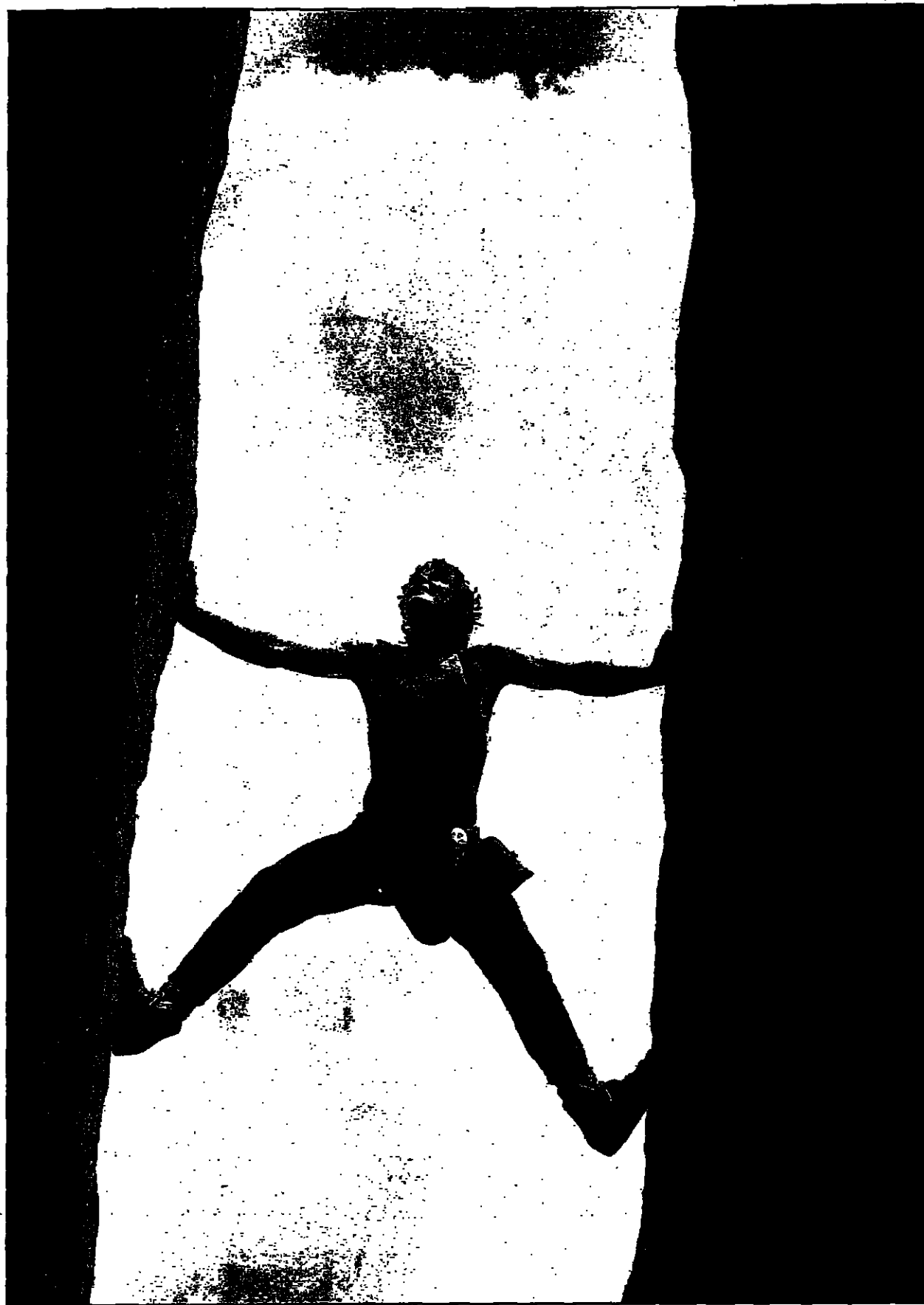
It's also essential to ensure that employers make careful plans for your return. Rachel Howarth, 28, took eight months off in 1997, after working as a customer services manager at Tesco for 18 months. "Upon my return, I was given instant advice on relevant opportunities – and soon after, was promoted to personnel manager in a bigger store, and am set to become store manager in 12 months' time. I guess Tesco realised that there is a lot of competition in the retail market for head-hunting staff, and they were careful not to let that happen with me. It's worked, because they've been so caring that I wouldn't want to work anywhere else."

Perhaps surprisingly, some organisations have an extremely low take-up rate for career breaks. This is certainly the case at county council offices. Similarly, at Unilever, it is reported that very few male employees take up the option, while women only tend to use the break if they're having children.

"Many people – especially graduate recruits who have not been with the company long – may be concerned about not feeling needed," explains organisational psychologist, Mary Aitkenhead.

Another explanation is that, in an uncertain job market, employees are concerned that the job may not be there when they return, or that their replacement may prove more competent. There is also, of course, the potential loss of income, even in paid leave, if large bonuses or individual performance related pay is a normal feature of employment. And there are some drawbacks for the employer, such as the danger that disgruntled staff will take a sabbatical or break and then resign.

Nevertheless, research carried out by Conference Board recently found that over 24 per cent of participating US organisations now offer such breaks, and Britain is not far behind. "Graduates are at a particular advantage," says careers adviser Camilla Saunders. "Not only because they have the opportunity to take a belated gap year, but also because it's an excellent opportunity to step in and prove yourself as a replacement when you hear that a colleague in a higher position is taking leave of absence."



A sabbatical or career break gives you the time to pursue unfulfilled dreams.

Steve Peake

A-Z OF EMPLOYERS

THE MET OFFICE

Age: 148

History: The Met Office began as part of the Board of Trade, led by Vice-Admiral Fitzroy – better known as Captain of the *Beagle*, which took Darwin on his voyage of discovery. In the early 1900s, the office moved to the Air Ministry; it's still an agency of the Ministry of Defence. But since April 1996, it has operated as a Trading Fund, with one shareholder: the Government.

Address: Based in London Road, Bracknell.

Ambience: Renowned as a friendly organisation with a team environment and with some independent work. Much of the office is open-plan, although there's a dress code and staff are expected to be smart – particularly those who appear on telly.

Vital statistics: The office's annual revenue approaches £155m, with the largest customers the MoD (£54m) and the public Met Service (£36m). It also provides forecasts for commercial customers (£24m). It employs just under 2,200 people in more than 80 locations.

Lifestyle: Staff work 37 hours per week net. There's also opportunity for foreign travel, especially for conferences and seminars.

Easy to get into? Up to 3,000 graduates apply every year, with just 200 vacancies. You don't, however, need a specific grade of degree. Relevant experience is also taken into consideration: Sandwich placements and summer work experience is also a possibility; graduates should apply by letter, enclosing a CV.

Glimmering alumnus: Bill Giles, erstwhile television presenter, is just one graduate from the Met Office.

Pay: Starting pay depends on the job and experience. It's decided at interview stage, and pay is thence onward performance-related.

Training: Foundation training is available in R&D, IT or forecasting. There's also training at the Met Office College.

Facilities: Staff canteen, "small" bar, gym, sports and social associations.

Who's the boss? Peter Ewins has been chief executive since August 1997. Before he joined the Met Office, he was MoD Chief Scientist. RACHELLE THACKRAY

I need a new path

HELP DESK

YOUR CAREER PROBLEMS SOLVED BY THE EXPERTS

The problem
I am 51-years-old and have been a probation officer for 26 years. Although I am reasonably good at my job and have survived changes at work, I would welcome the stimulus of a different type of job before I retire. My skills include interviewing techniques and answering individuals; one-to-one or group counselling; the preparation of clear and concise pre-sentencing reports for judges and magistrates; interacting with solicitors, psychiatrists, social workers etc; supervising potentially dangerous offenders and sex abusers and the keeping of records. I have a mortgage and three children and would thus be unable to live on a very low income while re-training. I would not consider a teaching job because of the profession's low morale. I dislike driving and would prefer not to live in another county. I am looking for a salary of about £23k. H TOMKIN, DEVON

The solutions
Joanna Crigg, author of *Portfolio Working: A Practical Guide to Thriving in the Changing Workplace* (Kogan Page, £12.99), says:
Wow! What a fantastic array of skills. You have also survived workplace change and welcome more. That's what you need "out there": specific skills plus the right attitude. But how much effort are you prepared to put into it? Three children and a mortgage sap the energies, and re-training from scratch won't solve the salary needs. Try a "directions"-type career and lifestyle assessment. You are "thinking" rather than needing to make change now. You have

time to research, network, plan, gain additional skills or start a business on the side. See if you can do your job part-time. Play with ideas and see how they pan out. Anything is possible; it's true for some people at some stages in their development. Are you ready? Find out.

Elaine Nicholls, Head of Career Development, Career Psychology Ltd, (Trafalgar House, 11 Waterloo Place, London, SW1Y 4AL, 0171-978 1010), says:
Making a career change at any time of your life is a difficult and often unsettling experience. Having worked in the same profession for all of your working life can render it even more problematic to identify transferable skills and aptitudes. That said, this is a very exciting time for you because more people are making work changes than ever. It is possible to make a positive change without experiencing too much financial hardship if you seek the right kind of professional advice. Career guidance consultants and occupational psychologists can give you this objective professional advice by using psychometric tests to identify areas of interest, personality traits and aptitudes. They will also take into consideration practical issues such as personal or geographic limitations, your experience and, as a result, identify career options for you – many of which you may not have been aware of. You will also find it easier to absorb advice offered by an independent professional. As a result, you will have a clearer insight into your personal characteristics, interests and abilities. Having assessed the options offered, you should then have a stronger

idea of how to transfer your skills to a specific and more rewarding career. Good consultants will provide advice on CV compilation, interview technique and job-seeking strategies.

Carolyn Brownson, Training Helpdesk Manager, Surrey Training & Enterprise Council, says:
Changing career direction after 26 years is a serious decision. You state that you are reasonably good at your job; my guess is that 26 years of experience means you are very good. In addition, you have a clear picture of your skills – I would suggest that you visit your local careers office and use the database of occupational information to help you identify potential career opportunities. Your local TEC or Employment Service Job Centre will have details of the type of job and skill shortages in the area. Your chosen new career direction may require you to train. A Career Development Loan – which is a deferred repayment, interest-free loan while you train – can pay for the cost of vocational training and any associated costs, such as living expenses. You can borrow between £300 and £8,000 (repayment starts one month after you complete training). Whatever you do, always base your decision on as much information as possible.

INTERVIEWS BY CARMEN MIDDLEDITCH

If you have a work problem and want expert advice, write to Carmen Middleitch, Fast Track, Features, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL; fax 0171-393 2182; or e-mail: c.middleitch@independent.co.uk

Sabotage – it's all the rage

Hacking, fraud – 'industrial crime' by disgruntled staff is on the rise. By Meg Carter

THE TIME comes when you realise just how much you've given your employer. That you've cancelled your weekend to meet that Monday deadline more than once in a while, and you regularly work late in the office. You've been diligent and loyal, and you feel confident that payback time is just round the corner.

Imagine your frustration, then, when the promotion you're hoping for goes to someone else. Do you take it on the chin, or do you get your own back by throwing a metaphorical spanner in the works? According to new research, a growing number is opting for the latter.

"Industrial sabotage" is on the increase, concludes a study published by the American Society of Industrial Security. In fact, American corporations are losing millions of dollars each year due to disgruntled employees taking revenge on their employers.

Dubbed "work rage" by some, the retaliation covers a broad range of tactics from carving malicious graffiti into the door of the office loo to planting computer "bombs" that can cripple an employer's entire IT network. It is now the biggest security worry for nine out of ten US bosses. And although far less research has been carried out in the UK, anecdotal evidence confirms we're catching up fast.

Organisational psychologists talk of a dramatic shift in the nature of the once mutually respectful relationship between employer and employee. Once there was an unwritten expectation that an employee provided loyalty and service for a set working week in exchange for a salary and job security. Recession, however, led to growing pressure on employers to keep costs in check, resulting in dwindling job security, increasing short-term contracts and a move towards more autocratic management styles.



Frustration can make employees want revenge. Hutton Getty

than ever before – and the potential damage they can cause can be extremely significant – says Cary Cooper, professor of organisational psychology at UMIST.

"Before, it simply came down to tampering with a bit of machinery. Now, one individual person can create enormous amounts of damage for an organisation by removing material from a computer system or infecting documents with a virus. It's even possible to target an attack on one particular person – perhaps to put them in a bad light."

Three particular types of workplace circumstances are likely to push irritable employees to hit back, Professor Cooper believes. "Some may be driven by insecurity. Perhaps they don't feel that enough is going on within their department – so they go and sabotage the system in order to generate more work for themselves," he says.

Alternatively, an employee might seek to tamper with his or her employer's systems in a misplaced attempt to take an ethical stance on their employer's activities or methods of operation. In the public sector, David Shaylor is the classic example of a displeased employee

fighting back. In a commercial setting, whistle-blowing might involve leaking commercially-sensitive materials to the press or worse, a company's competitors.

Peter, a 27-year-old computer programmer, admits that promotion of a less experienced colleague above him tempted him to act less than professionally. "I tampered with the system and corrupted some files, and then made a point of being on hand to sort it all out," he says. "I felt at the time it made me look good, but now I feel quite stupid. I was lucky no one caught me – and that I could sort things out before it was too late."

Not everyone, however, is so reticent. One displeased junior employee working for a large medical insurance company dumped a host of medical records, stole the back-up and then tried to blackmail the insurer for their return.

Fraud – which covers a wide range of white-collar crime from malicious damage to theft – is also on the increase. Three out of four UK companies have suffered it in some form in the past five years, according to a survey published earlier this year. And according to a new report

by the University of Nottingham Business School, middle managers are particularly likely to defraud as they have in-depth knowledge of how their firms work and how to cover their tracks. Official figures showing £5bn of serious fraud every year in the UK is the tip of the iceberg, claims the report.

Small wonder, then, that for younger people entering the workforce, the controls and checks used by a growing number of recruiters have never been greater. "Industrial sabotage" is best countered by installing safeguards – such as passwords, restricted access and back-up systems – in the workplace, Mr Beadle believes. Some companies have even introduced surveillance systems to keep an eye on staff. Other measures include more rigorous employee vetting.

"While employee screening can never give an employer a 100 per cent guarantee of safety, it can highlight applicants who could pose a potential risk by revealing a series of short duration employment, or even evidence of tampering with files or systems before," he says.

The extent to which today's younger employees feel disgruntled and want to hit back at their employers as a result, remains to be seen. Conflicting research suggests that on the one hand, they are just as ambitious as their predecessors, but less likely to accept the status quo, while on the other, they are more in tune with the Nineties style of management.

"Today's graduate recruits prefer the Nineties employer's 'new deal,'" believes Mr Conway. "They are young and open to new ideas and want to work more flexibly. Younger recruits respond well to performance-related rewards rather than rewards based simply on longevity of tenure – the old approach."

British employers may stand to lose less from an irritable workforce than their American cousins – for the time being. Even so, Mr Beadle says, a growing number are unwilling to take the risk.

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Back on the bench – for now

With the Law Commission and High Court already on her CV, could Mary Arden be the first female judge in the House of Lords? By John-Paul Flintoff

Dame Mary Arden is packing up boxes. It is her last day in the office and she has desks to tidy, shelves to clear. She is quitting her squat, modern building off Gray's Inn Road for premises that are a little smarter, at the Royal Courts of Justice.

Since January 1996, Arden has been chairman of a quango called the Law Commission, with the task of keeping the law up to date and relevant. That post has come to an end, and now she is returning to work as a full-time judge in the Chancery Division of the High Court.

The Chancery Division still bears the stigma of Dickens's Jarndyce vs Jarndyce in *Bleak House*, which dragged on inexorably as the heirs litigated over their inheritance. As she says, "Non-specialists expect Chancery work to involve only the landed gentry, but that is far from being the case." She will frequently have to deal with bankruptcy cases and cases where individuals challenge their local authority. The Chancery Division is also where George Michael's case against Sony was heard, and Paul Gascoigne's contractual dispute took place.

Such cases may be fascinating, but supporters suggest that she will not be staying in the Chancery Division for long. Arden, aged 52, has been widely tipped as the next woman to go to the Court of Appeal (there is currently only one). And with youth on her side, she may even become the first woman judge in the House of Lords.

This is long overdue. It has been several years since a woman was appointed to the Court of Appeal. The last 17 appointments to the High Court and above have all been men. Critics of the current system of judicial appointments, which depends on word-of-mouth recommendations, say that it excludes women.

The former chairman of the Law Commission and her husband, Mr Justice (Jonathan) Mance, are the first husband and wife to work together at the High Court. Arden recalls one lunch time in February 1997, when she received a call from a journalist asking whether she knew that her husband was "last seen being followed by a woman with a gun". The woman, distressed by

the outcome of a child custody battle, had pulled out a gun in court. Recalling that incident, Arden is surprisingly calm: "I told them I had no further information," she recalls. "I felt confident that if my husband had been hurt, I would have been told." The gun, it transpired, was fake, but no one knew that at the time.

Following private school in Liverpool, and Girton College Cambridge, Arden studied at Harvard and then joined Gray's Inn. Specialising in commercial law, she took silk in 1986 and became a judge in 1993. She admits that she knew relatively little about the Law Commission before she joined it in 1996. "If you are in practice, then you are keen to know the answer when a client rings – or, as a judge, what you should put in your judgments – but you tend not to know much about how the law is reformed," she says.

A journalist asked Arden if she knew her husband was being followed by a woman with a gun

The Law Commission monitors common law established over the centuries by the courts, and statutory law passed by Parliament. With its slogan of working for better law, it also makes recommendations to keep the law up to date and relevant.

Since the commission was founded in 1965, 70 per cent of its reports have eventually been implemented, but the process is slow, despite the fast-track procedures for measures which have the support of all political parties. One recent DTI Bill, providing for interest on late payments of debt, stemmed originally from a Law Commission report published as long ago as 1978.

Occasionally, says Arden, there can be a swift progression from research to law itself, as happened recently with a mortgage fraud measure that was included in the Theft Amendment Act 1996. And she has not been slow in handling the criticisms that the commission has faced – her appearance on Radio 4's

Today programme showed that she was more than capable of explaining the hurdles it faced.

But since the change of government in 1997, a backlog has built up. The last year of the Conservative government was "fallow", and the Labour Government has been too busy with other legislation to implement some of the outstanding recommendations. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, has acknowledged that "there is nothing more frustrating for the Law Commission than producing reports which are of high quality and they just gather dust in Whitehall unnoticed."

Since 1968, the commission has had a long-term aim to codify criminal law. "In Canada," she says, "for just \$25, you can walk into a newsagent and buy a copy of the code that would probably fit into your jacket pocket. That means that the police – and lay magistrates – can have a copy available to refer to at any time, and also as a matter of principle, it is right for citizens to have an accessible code." Various areas have already been scrutinised, including offences against the person, involuntary manslaughter, computer misuse and rape within marriage.

Last month, the Home Secretary gave the go-ahead to the commission's proposals to allow hearsay evidence – from frightened or intimidated witnesses, or those who have died or are too ill to attend court. That provoked opposition from civil liberties groups – but recent Law Commission proposals relating to divorce also upset groups on the right, so the view is that the commission is probably steering a safe, middle course. Arden predicts that the process of codifying criminal law will be finished within three to five years.

As for what the next few years will bring for this woman barrister's role model, she inevitably plays down talk of further promotion, saying that she looks forward to sitting again in the High Court. She insists that she has not even discussed promotion with the Lord Chancellor. But when pushed to comment about the House of Lords, she admits: "It would be fun", before hurrying back to clearing the shelves and packing the boxes. Who knows where those boxes may be unpacked again in the not-too-distant future?



Dame Mary Arden, who this week left the Law Commission to return to the High Court

Nicola Kurtz

Justice for the not-so-rich

TOWARDS THE end of last year, *The Sun* published a "sleazeometer" review of sexual scandals, listing a number of Labour MPs supposedly involved in affairs, divorces or incidents of improper sexual conduct since the May 1997 general election.

The article included a reference to Helen Brinton, MP for Peterborough, implying that a complaint about noise coming from her constituency flat was caused by some undefined sexual activity. She was, in fact, giving a dinner party.

Mrs Brinton issued a writ for libel through her solicitors, Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners, "because the article was quite plainly not only wrong, but also totally and utterly defamatory". In an out-of-court settlement last month, *The Sun* agreed to pay "substantial" damages to the MP and to print an apology in the paper.

But without the crutch of a conditional fee agreement

'No-win, no-fee' deals mean we can all afford lawyers. So look forward to lots of litigation. By Alison Clarke

(CFA), Mrs Brinton says she could not have brought the proceedings.

"It is usually high earners, often in the entertainment and publicity fields, who have the resources to bring these claims. This no-win, no-fee arrangement makes it easier for people at all levels, including Labour MPs – not just the very rich – to take action against those who try to smear their names."

Conditional fee arrangements allow lawyers and clients to enter into an arrangement whereby the client pays next to nothing if he loses, but the lawyer can charge a success fee if he wins. Although the solicitor can, in theory, increase his usual charges by a

premium of anything up to 100 per cent, the Law Society recommends a cap of 25 per cent. And their research shows that the bulk of solicitors are keeping to this voluntary limit.

Although CFAs were first introduced in 1995, lawyers were initially restricted to offering them to claims for personal injury, insolvency or human rights issues. Then in July last year, the scheme was extended to cover all civil proceedings – except family law cases – as a way of ensuring greater access to justice, but this was also seen as a way for the Government to trim the legal aid budget.

That prompted solicitors Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners to launch the first scheme

offering a conditional fee agreement in defamation cases. Alasdair Pepper, a partner at the firm, explains that "because legal aid has not been available in defamation cases, the principle of 'justice for all' has been blighted. This new scheme should help some to seek redress who might not previously have been able to."

But there are still risks attached to the scheme. Although the client does not pay his lawyer's costs if he loses, he is still liable for any disbursements incurred (such as barrister's fees) and any costs incurred by his opponent. Most solicitors recommend that would-be litigants take out insurance to cover such an eventuality, although this is

ultimately the client's decision. The cost of the one-off premium varies enormously depending on the scale of the proposed litigation and the likely costs involved.

More importantly, a solicitor will only accept a case on the basis of a no-win, no-fee arrangement if he or she thinks it has a good chance of success. Ruth Collard, another partner at Carter-Ruck who acted for Helen Brinton in her claim, says that there are no hard and fast rules for establishing the likelihood of success. Much will therefore hang on the judgement of the solicitor. But one thing is certain, the greater the risk for the lawyer, the higher the success fee is likely to be.

Although the extension of CFAs may encourage litigation – Ruth Collard reports a tenfold increase in inquiries since the launch of their scheme – the Law Society insists that it is still a far cry from the situation in the US, where lawyers can take a slice of their client's winnings. Known as a contingency fee agreement, it is unlawful in this country, even if a client wants to proceed on that basis.

As to what the impact of CFAs on defendants is likely to be, Tom Crone, a lawyer for *The Sun*, says it will be negligible.

"We get libel claims all the time. We don't publish articles thinking that they might provoke a possible claim. We try to get it right, but when we don't, we say sorry and quickly retract what we wrote. Just as we did in the Helen Brinton case."

Although CFAs are unlikely to produce an explosion of litigation, US-style, the attraction of no-win, no-fee agreements will undoubtedly encourage litigants who might otherwise have let the matter drop. Which is good news for lawyers and bad news for the defendants, whoever they may be.

Human rights hope

MORE THAN 50 years ago, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights trumpeted that "if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resource, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, then human rights should be protected by the rule of law".

No one questions how difficult it is to pursue the perpetrators of crimes against humanity. But in cases of genocide, the answer begs the question: are we really to believe that an international rule of law exists, and that it is effective?

That is not to say that there has not been progress. Last July, a statute was adopted in Rome by the international community which stated the intention to set up a permanent International Criminal Court. Although 74 nations have signed, including the UK, Croatia and Chile, a sizeable number, including the United States, has not yet ratified the statute. If those participating countries do not ratify the statute soon, an opportunity will be lost.

But there are glimmers of hope. In May this year, the Appeal for Peace Global Conference will take place at The Hague. One of its purposes will be to spur efforts towards ratification of the Rome statute, which is currently bogged down in politics and complicated procedural discussion.

There have already been a number of moves on a more individual level. Two weeks ago, with seven other senior British barristers and one High Court judge, I spent a weekend at the ad hoc international court for war crimes perpetrated in the

OUR LEARNED FRIEND



BRUCE HOULDER QC

former territory of Yugoslavia. This is a truly international court, but with a narrow remit. We were there to train lawyers from other jurisdictions, but we also learned much ourselves. Justice Louise Arbour, the court's Chief Prosecutor, hailed the weekend as a success. But her own experience in Kosovo the same weekend was not as fruitful, as her authority was insufficient to persuade Serbian officials who appeared to be determined to deny the right of the international rule of law.

But, generally, this court is proving successful. The prosecutors we met were realistic individuals who are determined to give the rule of international law a good name. What they want is a permanent court to prosecute those who commit genocide wherever it occurs. In the meantime, the nations who shrink from the final step of giving the Rome statute real force are effectively ruining any chance of bringing to justice those responsible for genocide.

Closer to home, the Pinochet debacle (the rehearing is set to end this week) would have been entirely unnecessary if

there had been a permanent criminal court. If Chile had failed to prosecute, the statute would have permitted international intervention. The general could have been tried already. Instead, decades on, we have a challenge in the English courts, by the Spanish government with other interested nations each seeking justice for their wronged citizens.

The issue of human rights affects us all. Last year, the Prime Minister said that the Human Rights Act established "a firm foundation – and not a ceiling – for human rights". And surely the ceiling and roof above that edifice should be a permanent court which, by its statute, recognises all those instruments that underpin human rights and freedoms adopted by the international community in the last 50 years?

A humbling message was delivered last December when another party of barristers went to Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries in the world. So, it was with some justification that one of their distinguished Law Commissioners, Justice Naimuddin Ahmed, asked us all: "Can those great peoples who are the architects of nearly 100 human rights instruments postpone space exploration, nuclear tests and the manufacture of nuclear weapons, and divert their resources from these ventures until those instruments really become meaningful?"

Bruce Houlder QC is chairman of the public affairs committee of the Bar Council

CLASSIFIED

Legal Notices

THE RESOLVING MIXES 1996
WILCOX-3
DISTRIBUTION LIMITED
IN LITIGATION
NOTICE 5/99/99 CMAA pursuant to Rule 4.106 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that Stephen Francis of Parnall Street, London WC1A 2JL was appointed Liquidator of the above named Company on 27 January 1999 by the members and creditors.
Dated 29 January 1999
STEPHEN FRANCIS Liquidator

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THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

To advertise in this section please call Siobhan Mc Caul on 0171 293 2347.

PUTNEY
ABC (0870-902040) BR Putney
Putney Bridge Little Voice 1.15pm,
3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm Practical
Magic 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.05pm,
8.25pm Shakespeare in Love
2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm

ROIMFORD
ABC (0870-902041) BR Roimford
Practical Magic 2.30pm, 5.55pm,
8.25pm The Siege 2.25pm,
5.30pm, 8.10pm Very Bad Things
2.15pm, 5.40pm, 8.40pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (08705
050007) BR Roimford Enemy of
the State 3pm, 8.20pm Little
Voice 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm,
9.50pm The Mask of Zorro
12.15pm, 5.40pm Meet Joe Black
12.30pm, 4pm, 7.30pm Practical
Magic 1.15pm, 3.45pm, 6.10pm,
8.30pm Shakespeare in Love
12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm,
8.35pm The Siege 3.45pm,
6.20pm, 8.40pm

SIDCUP
ABC (0541-555131) BR Sidcup The
American President 11.30am, 6pm
Little Voice 3.45pm, 6.15pm,
8.45pm Very Bad Things 3.30pm,
8.40pm

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-907071) BR: Cric-
klewood Enemy of the State 1pm,
3.40pm, 6.25pm, 9.10pm Little
Voice 2.30pm, 4.55pm, 7pm Prac-
tical Magic 1.30pm, 4.15pm,
6.45pm, 9.10pm Shakespeare in
Love 3.10pm, 5.30pm, 8.50pm
The Siege 3.20pm, 5.45pm, 8.10pm,
1.45pm, 3.30pm, 5.15pm Very
Bad Things 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.40pm,
9pm

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-9020415) BR
Streatham Hill Antz 5.45pm Meet
Joe Black 1.20pm, 7.35pm Psycho
8.55pm Shakespeare in Love
2.25pm, 5.35pm, 8.25pm Star
Trek: Insurrection 2.15pm, 4.30pm,
6.45pm

ODEON (08705 050007) BR:
Streatham Hill Antz 5.45pm Meet
Joe Black 1.20pm, 7.35pm Psycho
8.55pm Shakespeare in Love
2.25pm, 5.35pm, 8.25pm Star
Trek: Insurrection 2.15pm, 4.30pm,
6.45pm

STRATFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE
HOUSE (0181-555 3366) BR/PG
Stratford East Bulworth 6.50pm
Practical Magic 2pm, 4.15pm,
6.35pm, 9pm Shakespeare in Love
12.55pm, 3.25pm, 6pm, 8.30pm
Stepmom 1pm, 3.35pm, 6.10pm,
8.45pm Very Bad Things 1.30pm,
4pm, 9.10pm

SURREY QUAYS
UCI (0990 888990) BR: Surrey
Quays Bulworth 7pm Enemy of the
State 3.30pm, 9.30pm Little Voice
4pm, 6.30pm, 8.50pm Meet Joe
Black 4.45pm, 8.25pm The Opposite
of Sex 4.20pm, 7.10pm,
9.30pm Practical Magic 3.50pm,
6.20pm, 8.40pm Shakespeare in
Love 1.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.30pm, 8.10pm,
10.40pm, 6.40pm, 9.20pm Stepmom
1.20pm, 6.10pm, 9.10pm Very
Bad Things 5pm, 7.20pm, 9.55pm

SUTTON
UCI 6 (0990-888990) BR: Sutton
Morden Enemy of the State
6.45pm, 9.30pm Little Voice
4.45pm, 6.25pm, 8.40pm The Pa-
rent Trap 3.50pm Practical Magic
1.25pm, 6pm, 8.30pm Shakespeare
in Love 3.40pm, 6.35pm, 9.15pm
Star Trek: Insurrection 4.40pm
Stepmom 3.10pm, 6.10pm, 9.30pm
Very Bad Things 7.15pm, 9.55pm

TURNPIKE LANE
CORONET (0181-888 2519) BR
Turnpike Lane Antz 5.45pm,
8.35pm The Siege 3.35pm,
6.40pm, 8.30pm Very Bad Things
3.55pm, 6.15pm, 8.45pm

UKRIDGE
ODEON (08705 050007) BR:
Ukridge Practical Magic 1.50pm,
4.05pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm Stepmom
1.40pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm

WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Waltham-
stow Central Little Voice 1.30pm,
4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm Meet Joe
Black 2.10pm, 7.20pm Very Bad
Things 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.05pm,
8.15pm

WALTON ON THAMES
THE SCREEN AT WALTON (01932-
2825) BR: Walton on Thames
Shakespeare in Love 3.10pm,
4.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.25pm, 2.50pm,
4.45pm, 8.15pm

WELL HALL
CORONET (0181-850 3351) BR:
Well Hall Meet Joe Black 3.45pm,
6.25pm Shakespeare in Love
3.30pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

WILLESDEN
BELLEVUE (0181-830 0822) BR:
Willesden Green Antz 5.45pm,
8.35pm Meet Joe Black 4.45pm,
7.15pm

WIMBLEDON
ODEON (08705 050007) BR:
Wimbledon South Wimbledon
Enemy of the State 2.10pm,
9pm, 11pm Little Voice 2.05pm,
4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm Meet Joe
Black 4.55pm Practical Magic
1.30pm, 3.55pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm
Shakespeare in Love 12.20pm,
3.10pm, 5.35pm, 8.30pm Stepmom
1.40pm, 5.35pm, 8.25pm

WOODFORD
ABC (0181-589 3463) BR: South
Woodford Little Voice 2.10pm,
4.10pm, 6.30pm, 8.40pm Shake-
speare in Love 1.40pm, 5.30pm,
8.10pm Very Bad Things 1.55pm,
4.05pm, 6.15pm, 8.30pm

WOODWICH
CORONET (0181-854 5043) BR:
Woodwich Arsenal Little Voice
1.55pm, 6.25pm, 8.45pm Practical
Magic 4pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

WOOD GREEN
NEW CURZON (0181-347 6064) BR:
Wood Green Antz 5.45pm, 8.35pm
Kuch Kuch Hota Hai 3.30pm

WYNDHAM
ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Wyndham
Central Little Voice 1.30pm,
4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm Meet Joe
Black 2.10pm, 7.20pm Very Bad
Things 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.05pm,
8.15pm

WYNDHAM
ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Wyndham
Central Little Voice 1.30pm,
4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm Meet Joe
Black 2.10pm, 7.20pm Very Bad
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8.15pm

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8.15pm

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8.15pm

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4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm Meet Joe
Black 2.10pm, 7.20pm Very Bad
Things 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.05pm,
8.15pm

WYNDHAM
ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Wyndham
Central Little Voice 1.30pm,
4.10pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm Meet Joe
Black 2.10pm, 7.20pm Very Bad
Things 1.25pm, 3.55pm, 6.05pm,
8.15pm

THE LUX CINEMA Hoxton Square,
NI (0171-684 0201) The Five
Thousand Fingers of Dr T (U) 9pm

NFT South Bank SE1 (0171-928
2322) E. Enneth (15) 2.30pm,
8.30pm Only Want You to Love
Me (NC) 6.10pm The Element of
Crime (18) 6.15pm It's a Gift (NC)
7.30pm Effi Briest (18) 8.20pm

PHOENIX High Road N2 (0181-444
6789) Little Voice (15) 2.15pm,
6.45pm x (15) 4.30pm, 9pm

PRINCE CHARLES Leicester Place
WC2 (0171-437 8181) The Boys
(18) 1.30pm The Big Lebowski
(18) 3.30pm Boogie Nights (18)
6.10pm The Last Days of Disco
(15) 9.20pm

RIVERSIDE STUDIOS Crisp Road
W6 (0171-420 0100) Orlando (PG)
6.45pm x Elizabeth 8.40pm

WATERMANS ARTS CENTRE High
Street, Brentford, Middlesex (0181-
176) London (12) 1.30pm,
4.30pm On Console & Chanson
(PG) 7pm My Name is Joe (15)
9pm

BRIGHTON
DUKE OF YORKS (01273-602503)
Two Girls and a Guy (18) 2.30pm,
6.45pm The Opposite of Sex (18)
4.30pm, 8.45pm

BRISTOL
CUBE (0114-907 4191) Year of the
Horse (15) 8.30pm

WATERSHED (0117-925 3845)
Fire (15) 6pm x (15) 6.05pm,
8.40pm Fear and Loathing in Las
Vegas (18) 8.30pm

CAMBRIDGE
ARTS (01223-504444) The Opposite
of Sex (18) 1.15pm, 9.30pm
x (18) 1.15pm, 9.30pm Insurrec-
tion Benjamin (15) 5.30pm

CARDIFF
CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE (01222-
596666) Bulworth (18) 2.30pm,
7.30pm Little Voice (15) 6.15pm
Flame (12) 8.15pm

CHICHESTER
NEW PARK FILM CENTRE (01243-
786550) Little Voice (15) 2.15pm,
4.30pm, 9pm Victory (15) 6.45pm

NORWICH
CINEMA CITY (01603-622047) The
Sweeney's Daughter Never Cries
(15) 2.30pm, 8.15pm Rien Ne Va
Plus (15) 5.45pm

BATH
ABC (01225-461730) Shakespeare
in Love (15)

LITTLE THEATRE (01225-466822)
Babe: Pig in the City (U); Enemy of
the State (15); The Mask of Zorro
(PG)

ROBINSON (01225-461506) Prac-
tical Magic (12); Stepmom (12);
The Swan Princess (U); Two Girls and
a Guy (18)

CAMBRIDGE
WARNER VILLAGE (01223-
460442) Antz (PG); Babe: Pig in
the City (U); Bulworth (18); En-
emy of the State (15); Little Voice
(15); The Mask of Zorro (PG); Meet
Joe Black (12); The Parent Trap
(PG); Practical Magic (12); The
Prince of Egypt (U); Rush Hour
(15); Shakespeare in Love (15);
Small Soldiers (PG); Star Trek: In-
surrection (PG); Stepmom (12);
Very Bad Things (18)

COLCHESTER
ODEON (08705-050007) Antz
(PG); Dr Dolittle (PG); Enemy of
the State (15); The Exorcist (25th
Anniversary Release) (18); Little
Voice (15); The Mask of Zorro
(PG); Meet Joe Black (12); Mulan
(U); The Parent Trap (PG); Prac-
tical Magic (12); The Prince of
Egypt (U); Psycho (15); Rush Hour
(15); Shakespeare in Love (15);
Small Soldiers (PG); Star Trek: In-
surrection (PG); Stepmom (12);
Very Bad Things (18)

DOVER
SILVER SCREEN (01304-228000)
Babe: Pig in the City (U); The Prince
of Egypt (U); The Siege (15)

HEREFORD
ABC (01432-272554) Little Voice
(15); Star Trek: Insurrection (PG)
The Courtyard (01432-359252):
The Last Days of Disco (15)

IPSWICH
VIRGIN (0870-907074) Antz (PG);
Babe: Pig in the City (U); Enemy of
the State (15); Little Voice (15);
The Mask of Zorro (PG); Meet Joe
Black (12); The Parent Trap (PG); Prac-
tical Magic (12); The Prince of
Egypt (U); Shakespeare in Love (15);
The Siege (15); The Soldier (Asian Film)
(15); Small Soldiers (PG); Stepmom
(12); Very Bad Things (18);
Who Framed Roger Rabbit? (PG)

MAIDSTONE
ABC (0870-9020405) Little Voice
(15); Meet Joe Black (12); The Pa-
rent Trap (PG); The Prince of Egypt
(U); Shakespeare in Love (15);
Small Soldiers (PG); Stepmom (12);
Very Bad Things (18)

**ODEON LICHFIELD (08705-
050007)** Antz (PG); Dr Dolittle
(PG); Enemy of the State (15); Little
Voice (15); The Mask of Zorro
(PG); Meet Joe Black (12); Mulan
(U); The Parent Trap (PG); Prac-
tical Magic (12); The Prince of
Egypt (U); Psycho (15); Rush Hour
(15); Shakespeare in Love (15);
Small Soldiers (PG); Star Trek: In-
surrection (PG); Stepmom (12);
Very Bad Things (18)

OXFORD
ABC GEORGE STREET (0541-
550301) Enemy of the State
(15); Meet Joe Black (12); Mulan
(U); The Parent Trap (PG); Prac-
tical Magic (12); The Prince of
Egypt (U); Star Trek: Insurrection
(PG); Very Bad Things (18)

**ABC MAGDALEN STREET (0541-
550301)** Antz (PG); Shakespeare
in Love (15)

**PHOENIX PICTURE HOUSE (01865-
954099)** The Blue Sky (15); Bul-
worth (18); Cydo (18); Double
Indemnity (PG); Eraserhead (15);
Hana-Bi (13); x (15); Ponette
(15); The Secret Garden (15); The
Secret Garden (U); Scream (18); Snake
Eyes (15); A World Apart (15)

ULTIMATE PICTURE PALACE
(01865-245285) The Change of the
Light Brigade (NC); The Exorcist
II - the Heretic (18); Lock, Stock
and Two Smoking Barrels (18); My
Name is Joe (15); The Truman
Show (PG)

SALISBURY
ODEON (08705-050007) Enemy
of the State (15); Little Voice (15);
The Mask of Zorro (PG); Meet Joe
Black (12); Mulan (U); The Parent
Trap (PG); Practical Magic (12);
The Prince of Egypt (U); Shakespeare
in Love (15); Small Soldiers (PG);
Stepmom (12)

STRATFORD
ABC (0870-9020424) BR: Stratford
East Bulworth 6.50pm Practical
Magic 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.35pm, 9pm
Shakespeare in Love 12.55pm, 3.25pm,
6pm, 8.30pm Stepmom 1pm, 3.35pm,
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4pm, 9.10pm

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6.10pm, 8.45pm Very Bad Things 1.30pm,
4pm, 9.10pm

THEATRE

WEST END

Ticket availability details are for to-
day; times and prices for the week:
running times include intervals. ●
— Seats at all prices. — Seats at
some prices. — Returns only.
Matinees — (1): Sun, (3): Tue, (4):
Wed, (5): Thur, (6): Fri, (7): Sat

ALARMIS AND EXCURSIONS
Michael Frayn's new comedy about a
dinner party which is interrupted
by mysterious messages stars Pe-
licy Kendal and Josie Lawrence.
Gleagud Shaftesbury Avenue, W1
(0171-494 5065) ● PCC Circ. Mon-
Sat 7.45pm, [4/7] 3pm, £19.50,
£27.50 £12.50-£17.50 (restricted
views), 130 mins.

AMADEUS David Suchet stars
as Salieri in Peter Shaffer's ac-
claimed drama. Old Vic The Cui, SE1
(0171-928 7616) cc £20 0000
8.45pm, [4/7] 2.30pm, [1] 4pm,
£7.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

ANNE Rags to riches story of the
optimistic orphan, Victoria Palace
Theatre, SW1 (0171-834
1317) BR/PG, Victoria, 11pm,
[4/7] 2.30pm, [1] 4pm,
£7.50-£32.50, 165 mins.

ART Tom Manton, Danny Webb,
Garry Owen in Yasmin Reza's
eddy about art and friendship, Wyn-
ham's Charing Cross Road, WC2
(0171-369 1736) cc £67 1111 ●
Leic Sq, Tue-Sat 8pm, 10.30pm,
[4/7] 2.30pm, [1] 4pm, £11-
£20, 130 mins.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Lav-
enture musical based on Disney's
cartoon version of the favourite fairy
tale. Dominion Tottenham Court
Road, W1 (0171-656 1888) ● Tot
Ct Rd, Mon-Sat 8.30pm, 10.30pm,
[4/7] 2.30pm, £18.50-£35, 150 mins.

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Rus-
sell's long-running Liverpool musi-
cal melodrama. Phoenix, Charing
Cross Road, WC2 (0171-369 1733)
● Leic Sq/Tot Ct Rd, Mon-Sat
7.45pm, [5] 3pm, [7] 4pm, £11.50-
£32.50, 165 mins.

BUDDY Musical biopic about
the life of Buddy Holly. Strand
Strand, WC2 (0171-930
8800) ● Covent Garden/Charing X,
Tue-Thur 8pm, Fri 8.30pm, Sat
8.30pm, £10-£27, half price Friday
matinees, 160 mins.

CATS Lloyd Webber's musical ver-
sion of T.S. Eliot's poetry. Her Majesty's
Theatre, WC2 (0171-405
0072) cc £40 4079 ● Covent Gar-
den/Holborn, Mon-Sat 7.45pm,
[3/7] 3pm, £12.50-£35, 165 mins.

CHICAGO Maria Friedman and
Peter Davison star in this hit Broadway
musical. Adelphi, Maiden Lane,
WC2 (0171-344 0055) ● Charing X,
Mon-Sat 8pm, [4/7] 3pm, £16-
£36 (inc booking fee), 130 mins.

**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**
(ABRIDGED) Reduced Shakespeare
Company fast-forward through 37
plays. Criterion Piccadilly Circus, W1
(0171-369 1747) ● Pic C, Mon-Sat
8pm, [5] 3pm, [7] 5pm, [1] 4pm,
£6-£25, Thur mats - all seats £10,
120 mins.

DR DOLITTLE Philip Schofield
talks to the animals in this new
stage adaptation featuring Jim Hen-
son Puppets. London Apollo Ham-
mersmith Theatre, W6 9
(0171-414 6040) ● Hammersmith,
Tue-Sat 8pm, [4/7] 3pm, [1] 4pm,
£10-£32.50, 150 mins.

FLUORENCE Judi Dench and
Michael Pennington star in Tim-
berlake Wertenbaker's new translation
of Eduardo de Filippo's play. Pic-
cadilly Theatre, W1 (0171-
369 1744) ● Pic C, Mon-Sat, in
today 8pm, ends Feb 27, £12-£30,
120 mins.

THE GLORY OF LIVING Drama
set amongst the boxer palaces of
southern America from now play-
wrights America Gilman. Royal Court
Upstairs (at the Ambassadors)
West Street, WC2 (0171-565 5000)
● Leic Sq, Mon-Sat 8pm, £10, concs
£5.

GREASE Energetic stage version
of the hit film. Cambridge Earham
Street, WC2 (0171-494 5045) ● Co-
vent Garden, Mon-Sat 7.30pm,
[4/7] 3pm, £10-£30, 150 mins.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND Christo-
pher Cazenove and Susanah York
in Peter Hall's acclaimed production
of Wilde's comedy. Little Theatre
Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5045) ●
Pic C, Mon-Sat 7.45pm, [4/7]
3pm, [7] 4pm, £8.50-£29.50, 165
mins.

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen
Daldry's widely-acclaimed produc-
tion of JB Priestley's thriller. Garrick
Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-494
5065) ● Leic Sq, Mon-Sat 8pm,
[4/7] 3pm, £11.50-£29.50, 110 mins.

INTO THE WOODS Sondheim
and Lapine's acclaimed musical
based on fairytales. Donmar Ware-
house Earham Street, WC2 (0171-
369 1732) ● Covent Garden,
Mon-Sat 7.30pm, [4/7] 2.30pm,
£15-£27.50.

THE INVENTION OF LOVE Tom
Stoppard's play about the life of po-
et A.E. Housman, author of The
Shropshire Lad. Theatre Royal,
W1 (0171-494 5070) ● Pic C,
£30 8800 ● PCC Circ, Tue-Sat
7.30pm, [4/7] 2.30pm, £10-
£32.50.

JESUS, MY BOY Tom Conti stars
in John Dowie's alternative Chris-
tmas story. Apollo Shaftesbury Ave-
nue, W1 (0171-494 5070) ● PCC
Circ, Tue-Fri 8pm, Sat 5pm & 8pm,
[1] 3pm, ends 6 Feb, £5.50-£18.50,
120 mins.

**LITTLE MALCOLM AND HIS
STRUGGLE AGAINST THE EU-
NUCHS** Ewan McGregor stars as the
revolutionary activist in David Hal-
low's drama. Cottesloe Theatre,
SW1 (0171-369 1731) ● Pic C,
£10-£32.50, Mon-Sat 8pm, [5/7] 3pm,
£7-£27.50.

LORD OF THE FLIES Stage ver-
sion of William Golding's classic tale
of schoolboys living on a deserted is-
land. Lyric Hammersmith King
Street, W6 (0181-741 2311) ● Ham-
mersmith, Mon-Sat 7.30pm,
ends 6 Feb, £5-£16.

THE MEMORY OF WATER Alison
Steadman and Julia Sawalha star
in this touching comedy about three
sisters returning home for their
mother's funeral. Woodville Road,
WC2 (0171-836

THURSDAY RADIO

PICK OF THE DAY

DEVOTING A whole three-and-a-half hours of airtime to the Tennessee city associated with the emergence of rock 'n' roll and blues, *A Night in Memphis* (7pm R2) is by no means overblown. The quipped quipper Mark Lamarr presents two features, on Elvis Presley (right) and Sun Records, while Paul Jones gets a genial interview with BB King, for whom Memphis is "still the place". In between, there are a clutch of concerts, culminating in a set from Jerry Lee Lewis.



DOMINIC CAVENTISH

RADIO 1

(87.5-98.5MHz FM)
6.30 Zoe Ball, 9.00 Simon Mayo, 12.00 Kevin Greening, 2.00 Mark Radcliffe, 4.00 Chris Moyles, 5.45 Newsbeat, 6.00 Dave Pearce, 8.00 Steve Lamacq - the Evening Session, 10.00 Trade Update, 10.40 John Peel, 12.00 Andy Kershaw, 2.00 Emma B, 4.00 Chris Warren.

RADIO 2

(88-92MHz FM)
6.00 Alex Lester, 8.20 Wake Up to Wogan, 9.30 Ken Bruce, 12.00 Jimmy Young, 2.00 Ed Stewart, 5.05 Johnnie Walker, 7.00 A Night in Memphis. See Pick of the Day, 7.03 Memphis' Greatest Hits, 7.30 Elvis in Memphis, 8.00 Wendy Moten in Concert, 8.20 B B King on Beale Street, 9.00 Preston Shannon in Concert, 9.20 Boplin' the Blues - the Story of Sun Records, 10.00 Jerry Lee Lewis in Concert, 10.30 Richard Lester, 12.00 Katrina Leskanich, 3.00 - 4.00 Mo Duffa.

RADIO 3

(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air, 9.00 Masterworks, 10.30 Artist of the Week, 11.00 Sound Stories, 12.00 Composer of the Week: Liszt, 1.00 Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert, 2.00 The BBC Orchestras, 4.00 Ensemble, 4.45 Music Machine, 5.00 In Tune, 7.30 Performance on 8, Conductor Stephen Cleobury, Thomas Trotter (organ). A concert of music by 20th-century English and Welsh composers given last September in St Asaph Cathedral. Matthias: Toccata giocosa, for organ; A May Magnificat: Howells; Master Tallis Lament, for organ; Tippett: Five Spirituals (A Child of Our Time); Lewis: A Herefordshire Carol; Britten: Sacred and Profane; Hindemith: Hymnus ante somnum; Elgar: Organ Sonata No 1 (1st mvt); Pärt: Lord, let me know mine and (Songs of Farewell); Mathias: An Admonition to Rulers, 9.30 Postscript, Patrick Wright talks to five unsung, witty and engaging figures on the cultural scene who are distinguished by their originality and imagination; 3. David Rudkin, Anglo-Irish playwright David Rudkin's green credits include 'Testimony' and 'The Woodlanders'; on stage.

More Night Come, and on radio

The Loving of Alfred J Hitchcock. He talks about the importance of personally challenging drama. 9.30 BBC Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Ondrej Kukul. Martinu: The Parables. 10.00 Music Restored. Lucie Skeaping introduces a selection of music connecting England and France, including music by Robert Morton and Gilles Binchois sung by the Orlando Consort, and chamber music by Charles Dieupart played by Claire Guimond (flute), John Toll (harpsichord) and Charles Medlam (viola da gamba). 10.45 Night Waves. Paul Allen talks to Irish poet Paul Durcan, whose ambitious new collection, 'The Mary Robinson Years', attempts to chart both his own interior life and the spirit of his country through the watershed years of Mary Robinson's presidency. Plus first-night news from the world premiere of Fado Penas Andalusian dance drama, 'La musa gitana'. And the troubled life of August Strindberg. Paul Allen explores current interpretations of his work, as Radio 3 marks the sesquicentenary of Strindberg's birth with a production of 'The Father', which is broadcast on Sunday. See Pick of the Day. 11.30 Jazz Notes. 12.00 Composer of the Week: Taverner. (R)

9.30 Transatlantics. (R)

9.45 Series: Best American Essays. 10.00 NEWS: Women's Hour. 10.00 NEWS: From Our Own Correspondent. 11.30 Old Dog and the Partridge. 12.00 NEWS: You and Yours. 12.57 Weather. 1.00 The World at One. 1.30 Open Country. 2.00 NEWS: The Archers. 2.25 Afternoon Play: Only a Matter of Time. 3.00 NEWS: Call You and Yours. 0870 010 0444. 3.30 The Speech Makers. 3.45 The Scripted Life. 4.00 NEWS: Law in Action. 4.30 The Medical World. 5.00 PM. 5.57 Weather. 6.00 Six O'Clock News. 6.30 Yes, Minister. (R) 7.00 NEWS: The Archers. 7.25 Front Row. Franchise Stock chairs the arts programme, including the verdict on a new exhibition of paintings by Patrick Caulfield, and a report from France as Asterix leaps from the comic book into a five-action film. 7.45 Speaking for Themselves. Ten dramatised excerpts from the letters of Britain's great wartime leader and his wife Clementine, taken from the newly published edition edited by their daughter, Mary Soames. With Alex Jennings as Winston, Sylvester the Touzel as Clementine, and Helen Bourne as the narrator. Part 4. 8.00 NEWS: The Volcano That Changed the World. Simon Calder travels to the Aegean island of Thera to explore the mystery behind one of the largest volcanic eruptions in the history of mankind. 8.30 The Week in Westminster. Mary Ann Sleighard of 'The Times' takes a look behind the scenes at Westminster. 9.00 NEWS: Testbeds. Vanessa Collingridge explores the technologies that shape our lives. 9.30 Melvyn Bragg - In Our Time. Melvyn Bragg and guest discuss ideas and events which have influenced our time. 10.00 NEWS: The World Tonight. With Robin Lustig. 10.45 Book at Bedtime: the Sound of Trumpets. By John Mortimer. Will Terry Flinton become Labour MP for Hartscombe and Worsfield South? Will his affair with Agnes Smoock be exposed? All this and much more is revealed in this penultimate episode. Read by Rik Mayall. 11.00 NEWS: The Way It Is. 11.30 A Good Read. (R) 12.00 NEWS. 12.30 Late Book: Lemon's Tale. 12.48 Shipping Forecast. 1.00 As World Service. 5.30 World News. 5.35 Shipping Forecast. 5.40 Inshore Forecast. 5.45 Prayer for the Day. 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 4

(92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 Today. 9.00 NEWS: Melvyn Bragg - In Our Time. 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

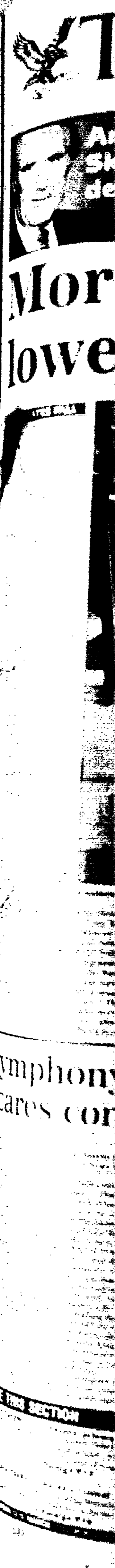
PICK OF THE DAY

AT HER PEAK, the actress Demi Moore was known as "Gimme" Moore. Those demands may have subsided a little as her films in recent times - *The Juror*, *The Scarlet Letter* and *Striptease* - have failed to match the success of her earlier offerings such as *Ghost*, *Disclosure* and *Indecent Proposal*. Can she regain her position as one of the world's most powerful actresses? Find out as she is profiled in today's *Femmes Fatales* (1pm Sky Premier).



JAMES RAMPTON

(8494688). 1.00 Turning Points (687378). 1.30 Wheel Nuts (556747). 2.00 Closs. SKY ONE 7.00 Count Duckula (322877). 7.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (352828). 8.30 Hollywood Squares (88574). 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (5567). 10.00 Oprah Winfrey Show (7788). 11.00 Gullit (20452). 12.00 Jerry Jones (28225). 1.00 Mad about You (5568). 1.30 Jeopardy (33365). 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (5567). 3.00 Jerry Jones (5527). 4.00 Gullit (30704). 5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (507). 6.00 Friends Married with Children (907). 6.30 Dream Team (6487). 7.00 The Simpsons (6704). 7.30 The Simpsons (2471). 8.00 American Dumbest Criminals (6452). 8.30 World's Wildest TV (7457). 9.00 Friends (5888). 9.30 E R (5767). 10.30 Veron-Close (6487). 11.00 Dream Team (5143). 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (5752). 12.30 The Commish (8869). 1.30-2.00 Long Play (753018). SKY SPORTS 1 6.45 Sky Sports Centre (315810). 7.00 World Wrestling Federation Shotgun Gun (4639). 8.00 European Tour Golf (4639). 9.00 Racing News (4639). 10.30 Ringside (4728). 12.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (78459). 2.30 Unbelievable Sports (7243). 3.00 Pool (79487). 4.00 Water-sports World (8094). 4.00 World Wrestling Federation Superstars (7075). 6.00 Sky Sports Centre (507). 6.30 Football League Review (8939). 7.30 Football Mundial (471). 8.00 European Tour Golf (2742). 10.00 Sky Sports Centre (51877). 10.30 Youth on Sky Sports (2250). 11.00 Trans World Sport (7707). 12.00 Sports Centre (725582). 12.30 Youth on Sky Sports (76592). 1.00 Football League Review (7322). 2.00 Spanish Football (3340). 4.00 What a Weekend (6050). 4.30 Sky Sports Centre (5180747). 4.45 Closs. SKY SPORTS 2 7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (243078). 7.30 Sky Sports Centre (507). 8.00 Friends Married with Children (907). 8.30 Dream Team (6487). 9.00 The Simpsons (6704). 9.30 The Simpsons (2471). 10.00 American Dumbest Criminals (6452). 10.30 World's Wildest TV (7457). 11.00 Friends (5888). 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (5752). 12.30 The Commish (8869). 1.30-2.00 Long Play (753018). SKY SPORTS 3 7.00 Aerobics - Oz Style (243078). 7.30 Sky Sports Centre (507). 8.00 Friends Married with Children (907). 8.30 Dream Team (6487). 9.00 The Simpsons (6704). 9.30 The Simpsons (2471). 10.00 American Dumbest Criminals (6452). 10.30 World's Wildest TV (7457). 11.00 Friends (5888). 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (5752). 12.30 The Commish (8869). 1.30-2.00 Long Play (753018). 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THURSDAY TELEVISION

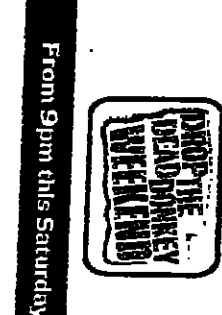
THE THURSDAY REVIEW
The Independent 4 February 1999

ROBERT HANKS
TELEVISION REVIEW

IT IS 1911, you have to admit, that a society as much as ours, as America can produce television which is creative to the point of prisoners. On the big screen, Hollywood is prepared to show any amount of flesh in increasingly surprising positions, but on television, sex has, for the most part, to be covered up by clever camera angles and double entendres. Hence the type surrounding *Sex and the City*, an American series which supposedly breaks new ground with a frank, witty look at the lives of women in New York. The series is based on a weekly column in the *New York Observer* by Candace Bushnell - who is here translated into Sarah Jessica Parker. Every week, she and her girlfriends discuss the awesomeness of being unmarried in your thirties, and define some new aspect of male coyness and amorality. The basic job is that, however, they will sleep lower in the first part of last night's opening credits. Carrie set out to do it. It was possible to have sex like a man - that is, without facing anything afterwards. When the recent episode of *Sex and the City*, by the revelation that men are academically bright but don't know how to communicate with people. But the husband with the way the camera dices into the middle of all this, it's a different place. And because of its pace, it can permit itself a crudity of gesture - the editor, widow, who could otherwise look mechanical, and then, American television can make foot ulcers and brain-dead, it can only turn into a vehicle for cheap laughs. Explain that one, mate. DH Lawrence blash. But

POLITICS. RECESSION. DISASTERS. WAR.

WHAT A LAUGH.



BBC1

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